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THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

THE most distinctly marked epoch in the history of our island is the conquest of England by the Normans in the end of the eleventh century. This period of British history has recently received much attention from historians; and perhaps the following brief narrative, in which we adopt the spirit, and avail ourselves of the investigations, of these historians, may be of popular service.

At the dawn of history our island was inhabited by different Celtic or Gaelic races. About the commencement of the Christian era the Romans invaded it, and having conquered the greater part of it, kept possession of it for four hundred years, governing and civilising the inhabitants. In the year 410, however, the Roman armies were called out of Britain, their services being required to assist in repelling the invasion of the German or barbarian races, which were pouring in upon the central parts of the Roman empire. Thus abandoned by the Romans, the island was for some time in a state of confusion, owing to the inroads which the Scots and Picts of the north, who had not been softened by intercourse with the Romans, were constantly making upon the Cambrians and Logrians of the south, who, though belonging to the same original stock with themselves, had, in consequence of Roman influence, lost much of their native wildness of character. Not able to defend themselves against the Scots and Picts, the Cambrians and Logrians invited the assistance of Hengst and Horsa, two German corsairs, who,

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roving the seas in quest of booty, chanced to land on the coast of Kent. Hengst and Horsa quickly brought into England an army of their own countrymen from that part of the continent which we now call Denmark; and these being followed by others of the same race from the Netherlands and Gaul, the island, in the course of sixty or seventy years, was overrun by a new population of Angles, Jutes, and Saxons, and the original Celtic inhabitants were pushed before them, and cooped up in a few corners, into which it was difficult to pursue them. The new inhabitants of England were gradually converted to Christianity by missionaries from Rome. For nearly three hundred years they remained broken up into six or seven separate little kingdoms or provinces; but at length, about the end of the ninth century, they were incorporated into one monarchy, called the kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons. This kingdom included all that we now call England, except a considerable portion in the north called Northumbria, which had been seized by the Danish and Norwegian pirates or sea-kings, who were then the terror of the north of Europe. The inhabitants of this part of England were called Anglo-Danes, to distinguish them from the Anglo-Saxons. About the year 934, however, Ethelstan, king of the Anglo-Saxons, the grandson of Alfred the Great, gained a great victory over the Anglo-Danish king, and incorporated the whole country, from the Tweed to Land's End, into one kingdom, called *England*, divided no longer into separate states, but into a number of shires or counties, as at present. Still, the animosity between the two populations—the Anglo-Saxon and the Anglo-Danish—continued, and many attempts were made by the Anglo-Danes to obtain the sovereignty of the island. They at last effected it under Sweyn or Sweno, a Danish sea-king, who came across the German Ocean with a large fleet, and, after many battles, succeeded, in 1013, in driving the Anglo-Saxon king, Ethelred, out of the country, and assuming the crown himself. The expelled king, Ethelred, with his two sons, took refuge in the dominions of Richard, Duke of Normandy, in France, whose sister he had married—a step which, as will afterwards appear, was followed by very unforeseen consequences.

The Danish king, Sweyn, dying in 1014, and his son Knut, or Canute, not being able immediately to seize the vacant throne, Ethelred again obtained temporary possession of a part of England. In 1016, however, he too died, and his Anglo-Saxon subjects chose as his successor his natural son, Edmund Ironside, passing over his two legitimate children, Alfred and Edward, who were then at their uncle's court in Normandy. For a while the struggle lasted between the two rivals for the throne—Edmund the Anglo-Saxon, and Canute the Dane—and many battles were fought with various *success*. In one of these battles, the Danes having been defeated, and *forced to flee*, one of their principal captains, named Ulf, lost his

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way in the woods. After wandering all night, he met at daybreak a young peasant driving a herd of oxen, whom he saluted, and asked his name. 'I am Godwin, the son of Ulfnoth,' said the young peasant, 'and thou art a Dane.' Thus obliged to confess who he was, Ulf begged the young Saxon to shew him his way to the Severn, where the Danish ships were at anchor. 'It is foolish in a Dane,' replied the peasant, 'to expect such a service from a Saxon; and, besides, the way is long, and the country people are all in arms.' The Danish chief drew off a gold ring from his finger, and gave it to the shepherd as an inducement to be his guide. The young Saxon looked at it for an instant with great earnestness, and then returned it, saying: 'I will take nothing from thee, but I will try to conduct thee.' Leading him to his father's cottage, he concealed him there during the day, and when night came on, they prepared to depart together. As they were going, the old peasant said to Ulf: 'This is my only son Godwin, who risks his life for thee. He cannot return among his countrymen again; take him, therefore, and present him to thy king, Canute, that he may enter into his service.' The Dane promised, and kept his word. The young Saxon peasant was well received in the Danish camp, and rising from step to step by the force of his talents, he afterwards became known over all England as the great Earl Godwin.

After the death of Edmund Ironside, Canute became sole king of England, over which he ruled with firmness and ability till 1035—the stability of his government having been secured by the prudent precaution of marrying the Norman princess Emma or Alfhive, the widow of the deceased Ethelred, and the mother of the two Saxon princes whose claims to the throne he feared. These two princes, still residing in Normandy, were apparently shut out from all hope of ever succeeding to the throne of their ancestors; for their mother having born a son to her new husband Canute, this son, whose name was Hardicanute, was left heir on his father's death. Hardicanute, however, found a rival in Harold, another of Canute's sons, and for some time the two brothers contended for the crown. Alfred, one of the two sons of the Saxon Ethelred, thinking to take advantage of the confusion arising from this contest, landed in England with a number of Norman followers, and gained some successes; but was afterwards abandoned by his party, and treacherously murdered, at the instigation, some said, of Earl Godwin, the peasant's son, now governor of a province. Of the two rival brothers, Harold was at first successful; but when he died, Hardicanute ascended the throne without opposition. His death took place in 1041; and now Earl Godwin, who was the most powerful and popular personage in the kingdom, resolved to free his country from the government of the Danes, and restore tranquillity and order by recalling Edward from Normandy, the remaining son of Ethelred. Godwin might, apparently, with little difficulty, have become king himself; but his

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motives were those of a great mind, anxious not for personal aggrandisement, but for the welfare of the nation. Accordingly, at a great council of the chief men of the kingdom, held at Gillingham, it was resolved, by his advice, to invite Edward to come over and assume his father's crown; on condition, however, of his bringing with him as few Normans as possible.

In 1042, Edward returned to his native land, and was consecrated king in the cathedral of Winchester. One of his first acts was to marry Edith or Ethelswith, the daughter of the peasant's son to whom he owed his kingdom. The beauty and the sweetness of this princess, as well as her love of learning, are celebrated in the chronicles of the time. 'I have seen her many times in my childhood,' says the monk Ingulphus, 'when I went to visit my father, who was employed in the king's palace. If she met me returning from school, she would question me in my grammar, or my verses, or my logic, in which she was very skilful; and when she had drawn me into the labyrinth of some subtle argument, she never failed to give me three or four crowns through the hands of her woman, and send me to take refreshment in the pantry.' 'Godwin,' the people said in their songs, contrasting the austerity of the father with the sweetness of the daughter, 'is the parent of Editha, as the thorn is of the rose.'

For a time all was peace and prosperity. Supported by the wise counsels of his father-in-law Godwin, and the immense power which he and his five sons, Harold, Sweyn, Tostig, Gurth, and Leofwin, wielded over the affections of the people, Edward rectified what was wrong in the state, established good laws, and earned for himself a reputation which outlasted his life, and appeared long afterwards in the deep feeling with which people talked of the happy state of England during the reign of the pious Edward the Confessor. Edward, however, could not root out the affections which thirty years' residence in Normandy had implanted in his heart; and forgetting the promise attached to his acceptance of the crown, he began to admit Norman strangers into the kingdom. The high offices of state were conferred on foreigners who had no interest of birth in the country. Fortresses were placed in the hands of Norman captains; Norman priests were promoted to vacant bishoprics; and the king's palace was filled with Norman favourites. The Anglo-Saxon language became unfashionable at Edward's court, so that even old Saxon nobles tried to learn Norman; Saxon mantles were laid aside for Norman short coats; and the very form of handwriting which the Normans practised was studiously imitated. In vain did the people murmur; in vain did Godwin and his sons try to resist the tide of Norman influence; the evil increased to such an extent, that Normans, on arriving in England, felt as if they were still in their own country. Before detailing the consequences which resulted from this conduct of Edward, it is necessary to give our

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readers a brief account of the origin and history of this singular people the Normans.

THE NORMANS IN FRANCE.

The Normans, though we are accustomed to regard them as Frenchmen, were, as their name *Nor-mans* or *Northmen* indicates, originally of the same Teutonic stock as the Angles, Danes, and Saxons. In the end of the ninth century, there ruled over Norway a king called Harold Harfagher, or Harold with the Beautiful Hair, who set himself resolutely to destroy the system of piracy which the Scandinavian chiefs had practised for several centuries in all parts of the North Sea. Within his own dominions he attempted to enforce regulations for preventing the oppressive exactions of the nobles, especially for abolishing the custom of *strandhug*, as it was called, by which a chief, when he was in want of provisions for his ships, used to land on the nearest coast, and seize what he wanted without payment. One of the most eminent of Harold's subjects was Rognvald, who had a son called Rolf or Rollo, renowned for his valour, and so tall, that, not being able to find a horse of the small Norway breed large enough for him to ride, he used always to go on foot. Returning from an excursion, Rollo ventured one day to land on the coast of a remote province, and exercise his right of *strandhug*. Complaint was made to the king; and a council having been assembled, Rollo was banished from Norway. The young Norwegian, collecting some vessels, commenced the congenial life of a pirate or sea-king. Sailing round by the Hebrides, where he was joined by many of his countrymen whose circumstances were similar to his own, he descended upon the coasts of France. Ascending the Seine, the bold adventurers took possession of the towns of Rouen, Evreux, and Bayeux, and in a short time were masters of the whole surrounding district—the inhabitants of which, however, they treated with more consideration than is usual in conquest. Rollo was chosen king, a title afterwards superseded by the French one of duke; and for many years the little Scandinavian kingdom of Normandy continued independent of the rest of France. At length, in 912, Duke Rollo of Normandy and Charles the Simple of France had an interview, at which Rollo agreed to be the king's vassal for his territory of Normandy; in return for which Charles gave him the additional fief of Brittany, adjacent to Normandy, or rather gave him liberty to conquer it if he could, for Brittany did not acknowledge the French sovereignty. At this interview an incident occurred which will shew the spirit of the two parties and of the times. When Rollo was about to retire, he was told that he ought to kneel and kiss the king's foot, in token of vassalage. 'Kiss a man's foot!' replied the Norwegian with astonishment. Being told that it was a necessary and customary ceremony, Rollo at

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length beckoned to one of his soldiers, and bade him kiss the king's foot in his stead. The soldier, laying hold of the king's leg, raised the foot to his mouth, and the king was thrown on his back, amid peals of laughter from the unmannerly Scandinavians.

Rollo and his Normans soon embraced Christianity; and their children, amalgamating with the native population of the province which they had conquered, lost their own language, and gradually acquired the *lingua Romana*, or French. In the course of a century this incorporation of the Normans with the natives was complete; the recollection of their Scandinavian origin was only preserved by the nobles; and the people of Norway and Denmark no longer recognised them as related to themselves by ties of kindred. In 1013, when Ethelred, the Anglo-Saxon king of England, took refuge, as before related, in the court of his brother-in-law Richard, the fourth in descent from Duke Rollo, French was the universal language of Normandy, and the Normans in all external respects were Frenchmen. Educated from their earliest years at this court, Alfred and Edward, the two sons of Ethelred, could not but contract a taste and liking for everything French; and when, in 1042, Edward was recalled to assume the crown of England, he was more a Norman than an Anglo-Saxon. Thirty years' residence in France must have made the language and the customs of his native country strange to him; and it was but natural that when his old Norman acquaintances came to pay their respects to him in England, he should give them a hearty welcome. The Normans, already noted for their restless and grasping disposition, availed themselves of Edward's weakness, as we have seen, and came over in great numbers.

THE NORMANS IN ENGLAND—THEIR EXPULSION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

Among the Frenchmen who came into England to visit Edward, was his brother-in-law Eustace, the hot-headed Count of Boulogne. In a frolic the count, riding armed with his men into the town of Dover, proceeded to insult the inhabitants, and to quarter themselves in the best houses they could find. One householder was bold enough to offer resistance; a Frenchman was killed in the fray; and his companions seeing this, drew their swords, galloped through the streets like madmen, striking at all they met, and trampling down women and children, till, being opposed by an armed body of citizens, nineteen of them were slain. The rest returned to Gloucester, where Edward was holding his court; and here Eustace, making his complaint to the king, demanded vengeance upon the inhabitants of Dover for the injury they had done him. Edward gave orders to his father-in-law, Earl Godwin, to go and chastise those insolent subjects who had dared to insult his guests. The earl, however, knew the facts of the case better, and told the king

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that he ought to protect his subjects against the foreigners, rather than punish them in so hasty and summary a manner for what inquiry might prove to have been no crime at all. The king, enraged at this act of disobedience, and urged on by his Norman favourites, resolved to bring Godwin to trial, and the result was a contest between the sovereign and his subject, in which the latter was able, by his popularity, to bid the king defiance. At length Edward managed to assemble a parliament, and, by keeping troops in the neighbourhood to overawe it, to procure a sentence of banishment against Godwin and his sons. Obeying this decree, Godwin, his wife Ghitha, and his three sons, Sweyn, Gurth, and Tostig, embarked for Flanders, while the other two, Harold and Leofwin, took refuge in Ireland. The only member of this powerful family left in England was the Queen Edith; and, as if to complete their downfall, Edward was unmanly enough to allow her to be removed from the palace, and imprisoned in a cloister. 'It was not right,' his Norman associates said, 'that the daughter should sleep on a down bed, while her father and brothers were in exile.'

After the banishment of Godwin and his sons, the Normans poured in upon England in still greater numbers. A Norman, Robert of Jumieges, became Archbishop of Canterbury, another Norman became Bishop of London; and Norman noblemen were appointed to all the highest posts of the kingdom. Among the crowd of Norman visitors who came into England about the year 1051, was one whose name was afterwards to be better known—William, the young Duke of Normandy, called at that time William the Bastard. William was the illegitimate son of the last Duke Robert, called, from his violent temper, Robert le Diable, by Arlète, a young girl, the daughter of a tanner of Falaise, whom he chanced to see one day washing linen in a brook. He was born in 1024, and brought up with all the honours of the duke's son. In 1031, when he was seven years of age, his father, Duke Robert, resolved to set out on a pilgrimage of penance to the Holy Land; but before he went, he made the Norman nobility elect young William their duke, and swear fealty to him as such. The boy, as he grew up, manifested a spirit worthy of the descendant of Rollo; ambitious, fierce, and even cruel, he had yet qualities which endeared him to his subjects in Normandy, and made them ready to follow him in any enterprise which he chose to engage in. From his earliest youth he had been occupied in war, especially against the neighbouring provinces of Anjou and Brittany. During the king of England's long exile in Normandy, he had of course become acquainted with the young duke his cousin; and indeed, during a portion of it, he had been indebted to him for liberty to reside in the country, William's accession to the dukedom having taken place ten years before Edward left Normandy. There was, therefore, nothing extraordinary in the circumstance of William's now paying a visit to the dominions of his former guest.

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The visit, however, was attended by very important results. 'In riding through the land,' says the historian Thierry, 'the Duke of Normandy might have easily persuaded himself that he had not quitted his own dominions. The captains of the English fleet which received him at Dover were Normans; they were Norman soldiers who composed the garrison of the castle on the neighbouring cliffs; crowds of governors and dignified clergy who came to pay their respects to him were Normans; Edward's Norman favourites respectfully ranged themselves round their feudal chief, so that William appeared in England almost more a king than Edward himself.' All these circumstances conspired to nourish in the young duke's mind an idea which he had already begun to entertain, that, on the death of Edward, he might be his successor. No hint, however, escaped him of what was passing in his mind; and after enjoying the hospitalities of Edward for some time, he returned to Normandy.

Meanwhile the banished Godwin and his sons were not idle. In constant correspondence with the Anglo-Saxon party in England, they soon learned that the state of affairs there was favourable to their return. Accordingly, in 1052, raising some vessels at Bruges, they sailed for the coast of Kent, and after holding communication with the inhabitants, they ventured to land. Immediately finding themselves supported by the population, they marched towards London, and at length compelled Edward to consent to an assembly of the chiefs for revising the sentence of banishment which had been pronounced against them. This assembly reversed the sentence, and readmitted Godwin and his family into England, Edward and he giving each other hostages as a security for their future amicable conduct towards each other. Edward's wife, Edith, now resumed her honours as queen; and all the members of this powerful family were restored to their former dignities, except Sweyn, who, stung with remorse for some crimes which he had committed in his youth, one of which was the abduction of a nun, had resolved to atone for them by walking barefoot to Jerusalem. This painful pilgrimage he accomplished, but it cost him his life.

The Normans at the court of Edward had taken to horse, and fled at the first rumour of Godwin's reconciliation with the king; and in a short time there was not a Norman of consequence remaining in the island. Among the first to flee, as if for their lives, were Robert, Archbishop of Canterbury, and William, Bishop of London. They and their followers embarked in some fishing-boats, which carried them to France; and so hurried had been their flight, that the archbishop left behind him his *pallium*, the symbol of archiepiscopal authority with which the pope had invested him. A few Normans, special favourites of the king, were, contrary to Godwin's advice, permitted to return to England; but a sentence of banishment was pronounced against the rest, as enemies to the public peace and to

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the English nation. Stigand, the Saxon Bishop of East Anglia, was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, and the other places vacated by the Normans were in like manner given to Anglo-Saxons.

Thus was England for a time cleared of the Normans. The expelled Normans, however; especially the expelled Norman clergy, were dangerous enemies. Robert, the ex-archbishop of Canterbury, immediately bent his steps towards Rome, then the centre of the intrigues of all the nations of Christendom. Here he laid his complaint before the pope and the cardinals, demanding a sentence against the Anglo-Saxon Stigand, who had been intruded into his archbishopric. The papal court was at that time very willing to receive a complaint against the English, who, since the death of Hardicanute, had neglected to pay the tax of Peter's pence, imposed by Canute in token of his reverence for the Romish Church. Rome, therefore, at this time received no money from England except what was offered in private donations. The Norman priest's complaint was accordingly listened to with attention; and the College of Cardinals having decided that Stigand was guilty of a crime in retaining the *pallium* which Robert had left in his flight, letters were granted to Robert by Pope Stephen X. declaring him to be the true and lawful Archbishop of Canterbury. Stephen's successor, the antipope Benedict X., during his short papacy, seemed disposed to favour the Anglo-Saxons; but Norman influence again prevailed under the papacy of Nicholas II., which commenced in 1059. The man who appears to have been most efficient in stirring up the wrath of the papal court against the English was Lanfranc, a monk of Lombard origin, celebrated for his learning and abilities, who was then at Rome on a mission from Normandy connected with the marriage of the Norman duke with his cousin Matilda, daughter of the Count of Flanders. Lanfranc seems to have suggested to the pope and the heads of the Romish clergy the idea of regaining their ancient footing in England by means of the Normans, whose duke might one day, he said, sit upon the Anglo-Saxon throne. There was one man then connected with the papacy on whose mind this idea of Lanfranc's was likely to fall like seed upon prepared ground: this was Hildebrand, the monk of Cluny, afterwards Pope Gregory VII., and even now the true ruling mind in the Romish Church. The great idea of Hildebrand's soul was the aggrandisement of the spiritual power in all the nations of Europe; and in the proposal of an alliance between the pope and the Norman duke against England, he saw the means of once more subjugating that refractory island under the ecclesiastical power of Rome. Accordingly, he used all his influence to weaken the English interest at the papal court, and to dispose the pope and his cardinals to sanction the claim which it was understood the Norman duke made, of being the rightful successor to the English king Edward.

In the meantime events in England were hastening towards the

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catastrophe. In 1053, shortly after the expulsion of the Normans, the great Earl Godwin died. The manner of his death was somewhat remarkable, if we may believe the tradition handed down by several of the old historians, but contradicted by others. We have already mentioned that Godwin was accused by his enemies, the Normans, of being implicated in the death of Alfred, the brother of Edward, who made an expedition into England for the purpose of claiming the throne while it was disputed by the two sons of Canute. The story accordingly is, that one day, when Godwin was dining with the king, one of the attendants, while in the act of filling a cup with wine, slipped with one leg, but saved himself from falling by the other. 'Ah,' said Godwin to the king, laughing, 'there the one brother came to the help of the other.'

'Doubtless,' replied Edward, glancing significantly at the Saxon earl, 'one brother needs the help of another; and would to God that my brother were still alive!'

'King,' said Godwin, perceiving the meaning of Edward's allusion, 'why is it that the slightest mention of your brother makes you look with an evil eye upon me? If I had any concern in his death, may the God of heaven cause me to choke on this piece of bread!' He put the bread into his mouth, instantly grew black in the face, and fell from his seat a corpse. So at least say the Norman chroniclers; the Saxons give a less romantic account of the death of their beloved chief, and one more likely to be true.

After Godwin's death, his sons, especially Harold the eldest, and Tostig the third, inherited his power. Harold was appointed governor of the country south of the Thames, while to Tostig was assigned the government of Northumbria. Tostig, however, being of a proud and tyrannical disposition, soon came to a rupture with his Northumbrian subjects, who were for the most part of Danish descent; and as their differences could not be satisfactorily adjusted, he quitted the country, and went over to Flanders, enraged both against the king and his brother Harold, who, he conceived, had not taken his part with sufficient earnestness. Harold, meanwhile, grew in popularity. Equally trusted by the king, and beloved by the nation, he perpetuated the glory of the great earl his father, and was universally acknowledged as the first man in the kingdom. In the spirit of his father, he resolutely resisted the readmission of the Normans into England, as fraught with danger to the independence of the country.

It will be remembered that, on the occasion of the reconciliation of the Earl Godwin and the king, they delivered hostages to each other, as guarantees of their renewed friendship. The hostages given by Godwin to Edward were his youngest son, Ulfnoth, and a son of his second son Sweyn. These had been sent, in 1053, to the court of William of Normandy, where they still remained in a *sort of captivity*. Harold, becoming anxious for the return of his

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brother and his nephew to their native land, begged leave from Edward, in the autumn of 1065, to pay a visit to Normandy, that he might bring them back. Edward was perfectly willing to release the hostages, but he was alarmed at the thought of Harold putting himself in the power of the Norman duke. 'I know Duke William,' he said, 'and his crafty spirit. He will grant thee nothing, unless he can secure some advantage thereby to himself. Stay thou at home, and let another person go instead.'

Harold, however, boldly embarked for Normandy. Unfortunately, the vessels were wrecked on that part of the coast which belonged to the Count of Ponthieu, and Harold and his companions were made prisoners by the count. In this dilemma the Norman Duke interfered in a handsome manner, and ransomed his intended visitor, thus laying him beforehand under an obligation of gratitude. Harold and his suite thus released, were received by William with the most studied attention and kindness; the hostages were liberated at once at Harold's request; and at William's earnest solicitation, the Saxons prolonged their visit, not only engaging in friendly jousts and pleasure-parties with the Normans, but even rendering them assistance in a military excursion against the inhabitants of Brittany, between whom and the Normans there had been a feud ever since the time that Charles the Simple made over Brittany as a fief to Duke Rollo. Harold and William became bosom-companions; they shared the same tent, they ate at the same table, and when they rode out, in the words of an old chronicler, 'tales together they told, ilk on a good palfrey.' 'One day,' says Thierry, 'William turned the conversation on his early intimacy with King Edward. "When Edward and I," said the duke, "lived like twin-brothers in the same tent, he made me a promise that, if ever he became king of England, he would nominate me his successor to the crown. Harold," he continued, "I should like well that you would give me your assistance to make this promise good; and be sure that, if by your help I obtain the kingdom, I will grant you all you choose to ask." Harold was completely taken by surprise at this sudden disclosure; but he could not avoid using some vague expressions of assent. William then proceeded—"Since my friend consents to assist me, I shall take the liberty of telling him what I would like him to do. The castle of Dover must be fortified, a well of water must be sunk in it, and it must be given up to my soldiers; moreover, to strengthen the ties between us, you must give me your sister, that I may marry her to one of my chiefs, and you yourself must marry my daughter Adela. I expect also that when you go away, you will leave behind you one of the hostages you came to reclaim; I shall bring him to England with me when I come to claim the crown." At these words, Harold perceived all the danger into which he had brought not only himself, but also his young relations. To relieve himself from his

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embarrassment, he gave a verbal consent to all that the duke required, intending afterwards to escape from his promise.'

Nothing more was said on the fatal subject for some time ; and Harold was flattering himself that no serious consequences would arise from his unfortunate agreement with William, when the duke summoned a great council of his barons to meet at Avranches, or, according to another account, at Bayeux. 'The day preceding that fixed for the assembly, William had caused all the bones and relics of saints that were preserved in the convents and religious houses of the country round about to be secretly collected, and put into a large chest or hamper, which was placed in the middle of the hall where the council was to sit, and carefully covered with a cloth of gold. When the duke had taken his seat in the chair of state, holding in his hand a drawn sword, ornamented with a chaplet of flowers of gold, and having around him his Norman barons, with the Saxon chief among them, he commanded a missal to be brought and placed upon the chest which contained the relics. Then addressing Harold, he said in a loud voice : " Harold, I here require thee, in presence of this noble assembly, to confirm by oath the promises thou hast already made to me in private ; namely, that thou wilt assist me to obtain the crown of England after Edward's death, that thou wilt marry my daughter Adela, and that thou wilt send thy sister into Normandy, that I may give her in marriage to one of my barons." The English chief, again taken by surprise, did not dare to deny his promise ; and approaching the missal with a troubled air, laid his hand upon its leaves, and swore to be true to his engagements with the duke, if he lived, and if God granted him assistance. " God be thy assistance !" said the whole assembly at once ; and while Harold still stood, at a signal from the duke, the missal and the cloth of gold were removed, and the dry bones and skeletons which filled the chest to the brim were exposed to view, and the son of Godwin became aware that he had been betrayed into taking an oath of tremendous sanctity. When his eyes lighted on the heap of relics, say the Norman historians, he shuddered, and started back with a changed countenance.' After thus obtaining his object, William did not seek longer to detain his guest, who departed for England, taking his nephew with him, but leaving his brother behind, as a hostage in William's keeping for the faithful fulfilment of his promise. William accompanied him to the seashore, and took an affectionate leave of him.

'Ah,' said King Edward when Harold returned, and told him all that had occurred, 'I forewarned you of what William would do ; I know him too well. Heaven grant that I may not live to see the misfortunes which are about to fall on this country !' It would seem, from Edward's demeanour, that he was conscious of having made some such promise as that alluded to by William during his *exile in Normandy*.

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DEATH OF EDWARD—INVASION OF ENGLAND—BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

Edward did not long survive the return of Harold from Normandy. Naturally of a weak and melancholy temperament, his last days were spent in gloomy forebodings and superstitious observances. His subjects likewise shared his anxiety, and began to remember old prophecies, in which terrible misfortunes were predicted to the Saxon nation. The feeling of sanctity attached to the oath which Harold had sworn—an oath which, according to the ideas of the time, was not the less binding that it had been imposed by deceit—had much to do with this national melancholy. Unless that oath were broken, the Norman duke would almost certainly be king of England. But if that oath were broken, would not Heaven punish the impiety? Such was the universal feeling of the English people, when the death of the king, on the 5th of January 1066, obliged them to come to a practical decision. On his deathbed the king was haunted with frightful visions; and, to the horror of his attendants, he would, in his paroxysms, repeat such passages of Scripture as the following: 'The Lord hath bent his bow; he hath prepared his sword; he waveth and brandisheth it like a warrior; he will shew his wrath by fire and sword.' In vain did Stigand, the Archbishop of Canterbury, assure them that these were but the raving fancies of a dying man; they received them as the divine announcements of coming disaster.

Before his death, Edward did one courageous act—he nominated Harold as his successor. Accordingly, on the day after Edward's funeral, Harold was elected king of England, and anointed by Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury. There was only one person alive who could have disputed the throne with Harold—Edgar, the grandson of Edmund Ironside, and grand-nephew of Edward; but Edgar, though English by descent, was a foreigner by birth, and possessed no qualifications which could entitle him to be the rival of Harold. Harold therefore ascended the throne without opposition, and signalised the commencement of his reign by various vigorous and decisive measures, calculated to secure the independence of his country against Norman intrigue. The beginning of his reign, however, was marked by the portentous appearance of a comet, which was visible for a month, and was gazed at by crowds as the harbinger of war and misfortune.

Meanwhile the news of Edward's death had reached the Norman duke. 'At the moment when he received the intelligence,' says Thierry, 'he was in his park, near Rouen, with a new bow and arrows in his hand, trying them. On receiving the news, he became thoughtful, gave the bow and arrows mechanically into the hands of one of his men, and passing the Seine, repaired to his palace at

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Rouen. Entering the long hall, he paced backwards and forwards, sometimes sitting down, and immediately rising again, shifting his seat and posture, and unable to remain in one place. No one dared to approach him; all his men looked on and wondered. At length one officer, who was more familiar with him than the rest, ventured to go up to him. "My lord," said he, "there is a report that the king of England is dead, and that Harold has broken his oath to you, and seized the throne. Is this news true?" "It is true," replied William; "and it is this that causes my chagrin." "Do not distress yourself about what cannot be amended," said the other. "For Edward's death there is no remedy; but for the wrong done you by Harold there is. You have right on your side, and brave knights to defend it. Make an attempt, then, upon England; a work well begun is half ended."

William had taken his resolution; but, crafty and cautious as he was audacious, he first sent a friendly message to Harold. 'William, Duke of the Normans,' so ran the message, 'sends to remind thee of thy oath, sworn to him with thy hand and with thy mouth upon the holy relics of the saints.' 'I remember the oath well,' was Harold's reply; 'but I was under coercion when I took it. Besides, I promised what it is not in my power to perform. The country has made me king, and I cannot give up the kingdom against the country's will; neither can I, against the country's will, marry a foreign wife. As for my sister, whom the duke proposed to give in marriage to one of his nobles, would he have me send a corpse? She is dead.' This answer was reported to William; who, however, did not even yet lose his temper, but sent another message, couched in mild but reproachful terms, entreating Harold at least to fulfil part of his promise, by marrying his daughter Adela. To put an end to all further solicitation on this point, Harold married the sister of two great Saxon chiefs, Edwin and Morkar. Roused by this final insult, the Norman duke swore that, within a year, he would be revenged on the perjured Harold and those who supported him.

The beginning of the year 1066 was spent in preparations on both sides. The Norman duke received an accession to his cause in the person of Harold's own brother, Tostig, who, it will be remembered, had, about nine years before, left England, owing to fancied ill-treatment at the hands of the late king and of his brother, and gone over to Flanders. No sooner had Harold ascended the throne, than Tostig presented himself to Duke William in Normandy, and offered to assist him in deposing his brother. William listened to his proposals, and gave him some vessels with which to make an attempt on some part of the English coast. Tostig, instead of proceeding immediately to England, bent his course to Denmark, where he endeavoured to engage Sweno, the Danish king, in the enterprise. Failing in this, he next addressed himself to Harold of Norway, the last of the renowned sea-kings of Scandinavia, and

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already famous for his exploits all over the north of Europe. 'The world knows,' said Tostig to him, 'that there is no warrior living like thee. Thou hast but to wish it, and England will be thine.' Harold was persuaded, and agreed to collect an armament, and invade England in the summer or the autumn. Thus were the English threatened with two simultaneous invasions—the invasion of William and his Normans from the south, and of the Norwegians under Harold and Tostig from the north.

Leaving Tostig and the Scandinavian Harold for a while, let us return to William and his Normans. Far and wide did he publish the perjury of Harold, enlisting the superstition of the times on his side. All Europe was intent on the impending struggle between the man who had broken his oath, sworn on the holy relics, and the man who had deceived his guest into taking the oath; and, strange as it may appear, the sympathy was on the side of the latter. At Rome, especially, the Norman interest prevailed. William accused Harold of sacrilege before the pontifical court, demanded that England should be laid under interdict so long as Harold reigned over it, and presented his own claims to the throne. The cause of the Norman found a willing advocate in Archdeacon Hildebrand, who saw in William a tool for the accomplishment in England of his own gigantic scheme of spiritual supremacy. Ardently and perseveringly, he endeavoured to bring the cardinals and leading clergy over to his views, and to persuade them to sanction a Norman invasion of England. For some time his representations were ineffectual. 'I almost earned,' he says, 'infamy from some of the brethren for my conduct; for they muttered that I was labouring in the cause of murder and bloodshed.' Before his indomitable energy, however, all opposition gave way; and a judicial sentence was at length pronounced by the pope himself, in terms of which 'William, Duke of Normandy, had permission granted him to enter England, to restore it to the sway of the Romish see, and to re-establish in it the tax of Peter's pence.' At the same time a papal bull was sent to William, declaring the excommunication of Harold and all who should adhere to him; and as a further evidence of the sacredness of William's cause in the eyes of the church, a consecrated banner was sent as a gift from the pope, along with a diamond ring, in which was encased one of the hairs of the apostle Peter.

In the meantime, while waiting the blessing of the church, William had not been neglecting more substantial preparations. 'The duke,' says William of Malmesbury, 'spent the whole year in providing the necessities of war; his own soldiers were armed and kept in discipline at great expense; foreign troops were invited into his service; his different squadrons and battalions were carefully formed and made up of the tallest and strongest men, whilst he took care that the chief captains and officers, besides having a perfect knowledge

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of the military art, should be men of mature experience : to have seen them either at the head of their soldiers or alone, you would have thought them kings, not captains.' It was not without some difficulty, however, that William persuaded his own subjects of Normandy to assist him in his project. 'Doubtless,' said the Norman citizens in the council which William summoned on purpose to ask their assistance in arms and money, 'Duke William is our liege lord. We are not bound, however, to pay him money to assist him in wars beyond the sea. His wars have already burdened us too much; and if he fails in this expedition, our country will be ruined.' The crafty duke knew how to overcome this opposition. 'He sent,' says Thierry, 'for those men separately who had opposed his wishes in the council, beginning with the most rich and influential, and begged that they would assist him purely as a personal favour. No one had courage, thus singly interrogated, face to face with the duke, to utter a refusal. Whatever amount of money, arms, or provisions they promised, was immediately registered; and in this manner the example of those who subscribed first determined the amount promised by those who came last. One subscribed for a ship, another for so many armed men, and some engaged their personal service. The clergy gave money; the merchants gave arms and stuffs; and the country people gave corn. Carpenters were soon employed in all the ports of Normandy building and refitting vessels; armourers and smiths in making lances, swords, and mail; and porters in carrying burdens backwards and forwards between the ships and the manufactories.'

The arrival from Rome of the papal bull, the consecrated banner, and the diamond ring, in which the hair of St Peter was encased, increased the enthusiasm. From east and west, from north and south, from Anjou, Brittany, Flanders, France, and Burgundy, nay, even from the banks of the Rhine, adventurers flocked in to join the expedition, led partly by the hopes of salvation in joining an enterprise which the church had blessed, and partly by the hopes of plunder. To all these adventurers William made ample promises. To one he promised the governorship of a town when England should be conquered, to another so much land, to another a rich English wife. To one covetous adventurer, who assisted him with a ship and twenty men-at-arms, he gave an English bishopric in prospect.

At the middle of August 1066 all was ready; hundreds of vessels and transport-boats were collected at the mouth of the river Dives; and the army was encamped on the beach, waiting for a fair wind to embark. For a whole month the winds blew contrary. This delay was trying to William, both on account of the expense which it caused, and of its discouraging effect on the minds of the soldiers. Never were his prudence and energy more conspicuous. 'The expenses of the knights,' says his contemporary biographer, William of Poitiers, 'foreign as well as Norman, were cheerfully paid; but

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he would permit no one, however high his rank, to seize anything at his own hands. The flocks and herds fed in the fields as securely as if they had been shut up in some secret place. The crops ripened for the sickle of the labourer without being cut down by foraging parties, or trodden under foot by the haughty carelessness of the knights; and the weak and unarmed husbandman travelled wherever he chose, singing on his horse, and gazing without fear on the troops of warlike men who crossed his path.' At length a breeze from the south sprang up, and the fleet set sail. The ships had got no farther than the roadstead of St Valery, near Dieppe, when the wind again became adverse; and a storm arising, the fleet was tossed about, and several transports were wrecked. The troops were obliged to disembark, gloomy and dispirited. 'Heaven,' they said, looking at the bodies of their wrecked companions washed ashore by the tide, 'is against us; we have not fought a battle, and yet many of us have been slain. It is mad for any man to seek to possess himself of a kingdom which does not belong to him.' 'It was then,' says William of Poitiers, 'that the duke subdued adversity by prudence. Concealing as far as possible the death of those who had perished in the waves, he gave orders for the secret burial of their corpses, and in the meantime he comforted his men by an increase of rations.' Still he could not hide his anxiety. Many times in the day he repaired to the church of St Valery, the patron saint of that part of the coast. Here he would continue for a long time in prayer; and whenever he came out of the church, he would turn round and look up to the weathercock, to see if the wind had shifted. Still the winds were northerly. In despair, William 'caused the body of St Valery, the beloved of God, to be carried out of the church, followed in procession by all whose duty it was to assist in this act of Christian humility. At length the favourable wind so long wished for arose; every voice and every hand was raised in gratitude to Heaven, and all began to embark with the utmost haste. The duke, in his ardour and impatience, was not slow to reprimand those who shewed the slightest inclination to loiter.'

It was on the evening of the 27th of September that the fleet set sail. It consisted of four hundred large vessels, and more than a thousand transports, and contained in all about sixty thousand men. The duke's ship led the van, with sails of different colours, with the three Norman lions painted on them, and the pope's consecrated banner flying at the mast-head. As night came on, the ship's lanterns were hoisted as a signal to the rest of the fleet in what direction they were to steer. William's ship, however, being the best sailer, soon left the others far behind. All the night he paced the deck in anxiety. In the morning he sent a sailor to the topmast, to see if there were any signs of the approach of the other ships. 'I see nothing but sea and sky,' cried the man from aloft. Anchor was immediately cast; and, to conceal his uneasiness, William

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ordered a repast, with plenty of spiced wines, to be served to his men on the deck. A second time the sailor climbed to the topmast. "I see four sails," he said. A third time he mounted; and now the answer was: "I see a forest of masts and sails." Anchor was then weighed, and the hostile fleet advanced to the shores of England.

Meanwhile Harold the Scandinavian had set sail from Norway with a fleet of two hundred vessels. Gloomy omens attended the departure of the fleet from the Norway shore. It was observed that, when Harold stepped on board his vessel, the weight of his gigantic body made it sink deeper in the water than it had ever sunk before. The Norse soldiers, too, had fearful dreams, betokening the unfortunate issue of the enterprise they were about to engage in. "Whilst the royal fleet was at anchor," says the old Norse historian Snorro, "one of the soldiers in the king's ship saw in a dream a gigantic female standing on a rock, holding a naked sword in her hand, and counting the ships. A crowd of ravens and vultures alighted upon the masts and yards of all the vessels. "Go," said the figure to them; "you shall have plenty to eat, for I go with the ships!" Another soldier dreamed that "he saw a fleet, which he knew to be that of his master Harold. It steered for England, and disembarked its freight of warriors on a shore where there was already drawn up a hostile army, clothed in shining steel, and with flags waving. Suddenly a shape was seen advancing in front of the English army—a tall and terrible woman, riding on a wolf, holding in his jaws a human body, dripping with blood; and when he had devoured it, the woman gave him another." The impression of these omens was effaced as soon as the fleet set sail under the command of Harold and his son Olaf. Sailing southward, along the Scottish coast, where they were joined by Tostig the Saxon, who had for some time been cruising in these seas, the Norwegians landed at length at Scarborough, in Yorkshire, two or three weeks before William's fleet had sailed from Normandy. After attacking and plundering the town of Scarborough, they sailed up the Humber and the Ouse, with the intention of laying siege to York, the capital of Northumbria, the district of which Tostig had been governor. Edwin, Morkar, and Waltheof, the present chiefs of the district, tried to arrest their progress; but unable to do so, they threw themselves into York, resolved to defend it to the last. Elated with his success, Tostig assumed his old title of chief of Northumberland, and issued proclamations requiring the inhabitants to submit to his government.

Intelligence of these proceedings of the Norwegians in Yorkshire was carried to the English king, Harold, who was then on the southern coast, watching the expected appearance of the Norman fleet. As the northerly winds still continued to detain it in the French port, Harold at length resolved to march north and fight the Norwegians, hoping that he would be able to drive them away, and

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return in time to oppose the landing of his more formidable enemy the Normans. Accordingly, setting out with all haste, he reached York at the very moment when the inhabitants, despairing of relief, had agreed to surrender to the Norwegians. Depending on this agreement, the Norwegians had broken up their lines, and retired to their camp at some distance from York. What followed will be best told in the spirited narrative of Thierry. 'The unexpected arrival of the Saxon king, who had marched by such a route as to avoid the enemy's outposts, at once changed all these dispositions. The citizens resumed their arms, and the gates were shut and strictly guarded, so that no intelligence of what was passing could reach the Norwegian camp. On the following morning the sun broke out with that intense heat which sometimes distinguishes an autumnal day, and that division of the Norwegian army which left the camp on the Humber to accompany their king to York, believing that they had no enemy to deal with, put off their mail-shirts on account of the great heat, and marched with no other defensive arms than their helmets and bucklers. On coming within a short distance of the town, they perceived all at once a great cloud of dust, through which, as it approached, they could discern the quick glancing of steel against the rays of the sun. "Who are these men," said the king to Tostig, "who are meeting us?" "They can be no other," replied Tostig, "than Englishmen coming to implore our friendship." The mass, however, advanced, extending itself every moment, till it became a powerful army drawn up in order of battle. "The enemy! —the enemy!" cried the Norwegians; and three horsemen were instantly despatched to carry the news to the rest of the army in the camp and the fleet, and to hasten their arrival.' The Norwegian king then unfurled his standard called *Landodan*, or the Ravager of the World, and, according to the minute description of Snorro, 'drew up his men in a long line of no great depth, whose horns or extremities were bent back almost to touch each other; so that the array was in the form of a huge circle of equal depth, in which shield touched shield both in the first and second rank, whilst the king and his soldiers were within the circle, where also was fixed the standard. Earl Tostig occupied another position, surrounded by his own men, and having his own standard. The king had ordered this arrangement of the troops, because he knew it was the common custom for horsemen to attack in squadrons, and suddenly retreat; for which reason he commanded not only that his army should be drawn up in this manner, but also that a reinforcement of archers should be added where they were most needed. Those in the first line received orders to fix their lances in the earth, in such a position that the points of them should be opposed to the breasts of the horsemen, while the second rank had orders to level the points of their lances against the breasts of the horses.' 'All of them, however,' says Thierry, 'wanted the most important part of their armour.

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Harold, the son of Sigurd, as he rode along the ranks on his black horse, sang extempore verses, a fragment of which has been handed down by the historians of the north. "Let us fight," said he; "let us march without cuirasses against the keen edge of the blue steel: our helmets glitter in the sun; helmets are armour enough for the brave." Riding round the circle of his men, his horse stumbled, and threw him. "A fall," he said, rising, "is a good omen." Not so it appeared to his namesake the English Harold, who, observing him fall, asked of one near him who that tall man was who had just been thrown from the black horse. "That is Harold, king of Norway," said the other. "He is a noble-looking man," said the Saxon, "but fortune is about to desert him."

'Before the two armies met, twenty Saxon horsemen, clad both men and horse in steel, rode up to the Norwegian lines, and one of them cried out with a loud voice: "Where is Tostig, the son of Godwin?" "He is here," answered Tostig himself. "If thou art Tostig," replied the horseman, "thy brother tells thee, by my mouth, that he salutes thee, and offers thee peace, friendship, and restoration to all thy former honours." "These," said Tostig, "are fair terms, and very different from the affronts and injuries I have experienced at his hands. But if I accept the offers, what remains for the noble King Harold, the son of Sigurd, my faithful friend and ally?" "He shall have," cried the other, "seven feet of English ground, or perhaps a trifle more, for he is taller than most men." "Go back, then," said Tostig, "and bid my brother prepare for battle; it shall never be said, by any but a liar, that the son of Godwin betrayed the son of Sigurd."

'The battle began, and at the first onset the Norwegian king received an arrow in the throat, which killed him on the spot. Tostig immediately took the command of the troops, and his brother Harold a second time sent to offer him and his Norwegian allies life and pardon; but all exclaimed they would rather die than be under obligation to the Saxons. At this moment the men from the Norwegian fleet came up in full armour, but fatigued by their march under the burning sun. Although strong in numbers, they could not sustain the shock of the English, who had already broken the first line, and seized the royal standard. Tostig was slain, and along with him most of the Norwegian chiefs. For the third time Harold offered peace to the vanquished: it was now accepted. Olaf, son of the slain monarch, along with the bishop and chief of the Orkneys, returned home with twenty-three ships, after having sworn friendship with England.'

Thus was the invasion of the Norwegians repelled. A more formidable enemy, however, was about to land on the English shore. The day of the battle between the two Harolds at York was the 25th of September 1066. Two days after, as we are already aware, the Norman fleet had set sail from the port of St Valery; and a few

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hours brought it in sight of England. Unfortunately, a fleet of English vessels, which Harold had stationed along the coast, had just gone into harbour for a supply of provisions ; and on the 28th of September William was able, without any opposition, to effect a landing at Pevensey, near Hastings, in the county of Sussex. The landing is described very minutely in an old French romance, written on the subject of the Conquest. First landed the archers, 'each having his bow in his hand, with his quiver and arrows at his side, all of them clothed in short, close garments, and having their hair cropped and their beards shaven ; all reached the shore in safety, and found no armed men to dispute their passage.' Next came the knights in full armour, with their shields at their necks and conical helmets of polished iron. Mounted on their war-horses, they leaped upon the sand, and all raised their lances, taking possession of the plain. After them came the carpenters, the smiths, and the other workmen attached to the army, who brought along with them, and unloaded from the boats, piece by piece, three wooden forts or castles, which had been made in Normandy. The duke himself came last. Leaping in full armour from the boat, his foot slipped and sank in the wet sand, and he fell his whole length on the beach, with his face downwards. A murmur arose among his men, and some of them cried out : 'A bad omen.'

'No ; by the splendour of God !' cried William, leaping to his feet ; 'I have seized on the land with my two hands, and you shall see it will all be ours !'

On this one of the soldiers ran up to a little hamlet near, and fetching back two handfuls of earth, he knelt before the duke, and said : 'My lord, I here give you seisin of this land.'

'I accept it,' said William ; 'and may God keep it mine !'

A temporary camp was then erected, and fortified in case of attack, and the Normans sat down to dinner. Next morning part of the army advanced upon Hastings, where another camp was made and fortified ; and the rest of the day was spent in exploring the country round about. Wherever the Normans advanced, the inhabitants, concealing their furniture and other valuables, fled to the churches and churchyards, where they imagined they would be most safe.

Harold was lying at York, wounded, when he received intelligence that the Normans had landed. 'Better,' he cried, when he heard the news, 'have given my brother Tostig all he asked, than have been away from the coast when William reached it. Had I been there, they should have been driven into the sea. But God's will be done !'

Marching southward like a madman, he collected soldiers as he went, and left orders that those who could not be instantly assembled should follow him. In four days he would have been at the head of a hundred thousand men ; but hoping to come upon the Normans by surprise, and defeat them, as he had defeated the Norwegians at York, so rapid were his movements that, when he was within seven

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miles of the enemy's camp at Hastings, his army did not amount to more than a fourth part of William's. Finding now that the Normans were on their guard, he was obliged to halt and intrench himself. He sent spies who could speak French into the enemy's camp, to observe their movements. Astonished at the cropped hair and shaven chins of the archers, these men returned and told Harold that there were more priests in the Norman army than fighting-men. 'No,' said Harold; 'they are not priests, and we shall soon see how they can fight.'

Harold was advised by some of the Saxon chiefs to retire towards London, so as to be joined by the reinforcements which were then assembling, laying the country waste as he marched. This, however, he refused to do. His two brothers, Gurth and Leofwin, then proposed that he should himself proceed northward, and place himself at the head of the army, which was fast recruiting in the northern counties, leaving them to fight the Normans at Hastings. This advice was dictated partly by military prudence, partly by the superstitious fear that Harold's presence in the battle, guilty as he was of a broken oath, might prove inauspicious. Harold, however, withstood all these solicitations.

William, on the other hand, although stronger than his enemy, did not hesitate to have recourse to treaty before risking a battle. He sent a priest, Hugh de Maigrot, to the Anglo-Saxon camp to propose to Harold one of three things—to surrender the kingdom; refer the question of disputed sovereignty to the pope; or decide it by single combat with the duke.

'I will not surrender the kingdom,' was Harold's reply; 'and I will not refer the question to the pope; and I will not accept of the duke's offer of single combat.'

A second time Maigrot entered the Anglo-Saxon camp with an offer from Duke William. 'The duke,' he said, 'offers to Harold, if he will keep his compact, all the country north of the Humber; and to his brother Gurth all the land which belonged to the Earl Godwin.' This offer was likewise refused. 'Then hear, Harold,' cried Maigrot in a loud and solemn voice, 'my master's last message to thee. He bids me tell thee that thou art a perjured man and a liar; that thou and all who adhere to thee are excommunicated by the pope; and that the pope's bull is in his hands.'

This last message, especially the mention of the pope's excommunication, produced considerable excitement in the Anglo-Saxon army. At length one of the chiefs roused their courage by bidding them reflect that the struggle they were at present engaged in was not a mere struggle which of two persons should be king; it was a struggle whether Anglo-Saxons or Normans should be masters of England. 'Duke William,' he said, 'has already promised our lands, our goods, our wives, our daughters, to his Norman soldiers; and if we once admit him, he must keep his promise. Nothing

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therefore remains for us but to fight to the last.' The truth of this statement was too evident to all ; and a universal oath was sworn to make no peace with the invaders.

The time had now arrived for a mortal struggle between Harold of England and William of Normandy for the sovereignty of the country. William had landed on the shore of Sussex, near Hastings, and here he took his stand, in front of the defences hastily set up by the Anglo-Saxons. 'On the night of the 13th of October (1066),' says Thierry, 'William announced to his army that the battle would take place next day. The priests and monks, who, in the hopes of booty, had followed the army in great numbers, met together to offer up prayers and sing litanies, while the soldiers were preparing their arms and attending to their horses. What little time remained to the soldiers after these duties, was employed in confessing their sins and receiving the sacrament. In the other army the night was spent in a very different manner: the Anglo-Saxons gathered in revel round their camp-fires, singing their old national songs, and quaffing horns of beer and wine.

'At daybreak, the Bishop of Bayeux, William's half-brother, wearing a steel hauberk under his priestly habit, celebrated mass in the Norman camp, and blessed the soldiers ; then mounting a superb white horse, and taking a baton in his hand, he drew up his squadron of cavalry. The army was divided into three columns. In the first were the soldiers from the counties of Boulogne and Ponthieu, along with the greater part of those who had engaged their services for pay ; the second consisted of the allies from Brittany, Maine, and Poitou ; William in person commanded the third, composed of the Norman chivalry. In front, and on the flanks of each column, were drawn up several lines of light infantry, wearing quilted cassocks, and carrying either long-bows or cross-bows of steel. The duke rode on a Spanish charger, which had been presented to him by a rich Norman, who had returned from a pilgrimage to Saint Jago de Compostella, in Galicia. Round his neck he wore suspended the most holy of the relics on which Harold had sworn, and at his side a young Norman, called Toustain-le-Blanc, carried the standard which the pope had consecrated. At the moment when the troops were about to advance, William raised his voice, and thus addressed them: "See that you fight well, and put all to death ; if we win, we shall all make our fortunes. What I gain, you shall gain too ; what I conquer, you shall conquer ; if this land becomes mine, it shall also be yours. You know, however, that I have come here not only to claim my right, but to avenge our nation on these English for their felonies, perjuries, and treasons. They murdered the Danes, men and women, on St Brice's night ; they decimated the companions of my kinsman Alfred, and put him to death. Come on, then ; and let us, with the help of God, punish them for these misdeeds."

'The army moved forward, and soon came in sight of the Saxon

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camp, to the north-west of Hastings. The priests and monks then detached themselves from it, and took their station on a neighbouring eminence, where they could pray, and witness the battle in safety. At this moment a Norman knight, named Taillefer, spurred his horse in front of the army, and raised the song, celebrated throughout France, of the deeds of Charlemagne and Roland. As he sang, he played with his sword, throwing it high up into the air, and catching it again with his right hand. The Normans joined in the chorus, or shouted "God be our aid!"

'When they came within bow-shot of the enemy, the archers began to discharge their arrows, and the cross-bowmen their bolts; but most of the shots were deadened by the high parapet round the Saxon intrenchments. The infantry with their lances and the cavalry then advanced to the intrenchments, and endeavoured to force them; but the Anglo-Saxons, drawn up on foot around their standard, which was fixed in the earth, and forming a compact and solid mass behind the redoubts, received the assailants with tremendous cuts of their steel axes, which were so heavy and sharp that they broke the lances, and clove the coats of mail sheer through. The Normans, unable either to force the redoubts or to remove the palisades, and wearied by their unsuccessful attack, fell back upon the column which William commanded. The duke, however, ordered the archers to advance again, shooting no longer point-blank, but at such an elevation that their arrows might fall within the enemy's intrenchments. In consequence of this manœuvre, many of the English were wounded, chiefly in the face, and Harold himself lost an eye by an arrow; he continued, however, to fight at the head of his men. The conflict of foot and horse recommenced amid cries of "Our Lady!" and "God be our aid!" But the Normans were repulsed at one of the gates of the camp, and driven as far as a great ravine, covered with brushwood and brambles, where their horses stumbling from the roughness of the ground, they fell pell-mell, and were killed in numbers. A panic now seized the army of the invaders; it was rumoured that the duke was slain, and they began to flee. William threw himself before the fugitives, barring their passage, threatening, and even striking them with his lance. "Here I am," cried he, taking off his helmet; "look at me! I am alive yet; and, by God's help, I shall conquer." The men returned to the attack, but still found it impossible to force the entrance, or make a breach in the palisades. The duke then bethought himself of a stratagem to draw the English out of their position. He ordered a band of a thousand horse to advance, and retire immediately afterwards in flight. At the sight of this pretended flight, the Saxons were thrown off their guard, and with one accord rushed from their intrenchments, with their axes slung round their necks. At a certain distance the fugitives were joined by a body of troops stationed for the purpose, and wheeled round upon

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their pursuers, who, surprised in their disorder, were assailed with lances and swords, whose strokes they could not ward off, both hands being occupied in managing their heavy battle-axes. Their ranks once broken, the entrances of the redoubts were forced; horse and foot rushed in together; but a desperate hand-to-hand combat was still maintained. Duke William had his horse killed under him. Harold and his two brothers fell dead at the foot of their standard, which was instantly plucked out of the ground, and replaced by the banner which had been sent from Rome. The remains of the English army prolonged the struggle till it became dark, and the combatants could only distinguish each other by their language.

'The few surviving companions of Harold dispersed in all directions; many died on the roads, in consequence of their wounds and fatigue. The Norman horse pursued them relentlessly, and gave quarter to none. The Normans remained all night on the field of battle; and at daybreak the duke drew up his troops, and made the names of all the men who had come across the sea with him be called over from the roll which had been prepared before they left the port of St Valery. A vast number of these now lay dead or dying, stretched side by side with the vanquished Saxons. The fortunate survivors received, as the first-fruits of their victory, the plunder of the slain. In examining the dead bodies, thirteen were found with the monkish habit under their armour. These were the Abbot of Hida and his twelve companions; and the name of their monastery was the first inscribed in the black-book of the conquerors.'

The body of King Harold lay for some time in the field, and could not be found. At length the monks who searched for it applied to a woman whom Harold had loved before he was made king, and asked her to accompany and assist them. Her name was Edith Swan-necked, or Edith the Swan-necked. She succeeded, better than they had done, in finding out the corpse of her lover. The spot on which the engagement took place has since been known by the name of *Battle*.

THE NORMANS MARCH UPON LONDON—WILLIAM CROWNED KING—THE CONQUEST COMPLETED.

The battle of Hastings decided the fate of England; but much remained to be done before the country could be considered as entirely conquered. The news of Harold's death spread quickly over the land, and the Saxon chiefs consulted who should be appointed his successor to the throne. Neither of his two sons was old enough; his brothers-in-law, Edwin and Morkar, the Earls of Mercia and Northumberland, had some partisans; but the general wish of the inhabitants of London and the neighbourhood was in favour of Edgar Atheling, or Edgar the Illustrious, the grand-nephew

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of Edward the Confessor. Edgar, a weak young man, was accordingly proclaimed king. Many, however, and particularly some of the superior clergy, were in favour of submission to the Conqueror, recommended as he was by the authority of the pope. Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Eldred, Archbishop of York, adhered to Edgar Atheling.

Edgar's reign was soon to be brought to a conclusion. After remaining for some days near Hastings, William and his army marched against Dover, the castle of which capitulated. Then, reinforced by fresh troops which had arrived from Normandy, he advanced through Kent towards London. A body of horse, however, which he had sent in advance of the army, having been repulsed by the Saxons in Southwark, he judged it prudent to make a circuit before approaching the city. Crossing the Thames, therefore, at Wallingford, he advanced to Berkhamstead, in Hertfordshire, and there encamped, sending out parties in all directions to lay the country waste. Meanwhile, the inhabitants of London were divided among themselves as to the course of conduct which they should pursue. Edwin and Morkar, with other patriots, had retired into the northern provinces, resolved to make a stand against the Conqueror there; Edgar Atheling, and Archbishops Stigand and Eldred, were unable without their assistance to defend the city; and the great body of the common citizens, with the *hanse* or municipal corporation at their head, were disposed to make terms with the Conqueror, and sent a deputy to his camp to ascertain whether he would guarantee them their ancient liberties if they surrendered to his rule. In these circumstances, nothing remained for Edgar but to resign his crown. Accordingly, he and his court, including the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester, and a number of other nobles and ecclesiastics, repaired to the Norman camp at Berkhamstead, and tendered their allegiance to Duke William, who in turn made them promises of kind treatment. The Norman army then marched directly upon London, and quartered themselves in the city as its lords and masters.

At a council of war, held in the camp near London by the Norman chiefs, it was debated whether William should be immediately crowned king of England, or whether the Conquest should, in the first place, be pursued somewhat farther. William himself, for some secret reason, seemed inclined to delay his assumption of the throne; but the chiefs, stirred up by the eloquence of Aimery de Thouars, a captain of the auxiliaries from Poitou, insisted that his coronation should take place immediately; and to this arrangement the Saxons were obliged to consent. Accordingly, Christmas-day, 1066, was appointed for the performance of the ceremony. On that day, William, and the chiefs of his army, amounting to two hundred and sixty, walked in procession from the Norman camp to Westminster Abbey between two lines of Norman soldiers. The streets were

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crowded with spectators, and all the approaches to the abbey were guarded by Normans. In the abbey were already assembled a number of Saxons, whom their fears induced to be present to assist at the ceremony. After William and the Norman barons entered the church, Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances, addressed the Normans who were present in the French language, and demanded whether it was their opinion that their duke ought to assume the title of king of the English; and at the same time Eldred, Archbishop of York (Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury, having refused to attend), asked the Anglo-Saxons present whether they were willing to receive the Norman duke as their king. At this moment the church rang with shouts and acclamations; and the Norman soldiers outside, mistaking the noise for an indication that some violence was being offered to the duke, or some interruption to the ceremony, obeyed secret orders which they had received in case of such an event, and set fire to a number of houses, and surrounded the doors of the church. All were thrown into confusion; the Anglo-Saxons who were in the abbey rushed out to save their houses from destruction, the Normans followed them, and none remained except the duke and a few ecclesiastics of both nations, who concluded the ceremony, and administered to him the oath usually taken by the Anglo-Saxon kings. The duke, it is said, trembled violently.

William was forty-two years of age at the time of his coronation as king of England. His reign, which lasted twenty-one years, from 1066 to 1087, has been described as 'little else than a succession of revolts, followed by chastisements so severe, that at its end few, if any, considerable estates remained in the possession of an Englishman.' Let us briefly sketch the principal events of his reign, down at least to the period at which the Conquest may be considered as having been completed.

The first occupation of William after his coronation was the confiscation of all the property of the principal Anglo-Saxons in that part of England which he had already reduced, and its division, according to promise, among his followers. After retaining to himself all the late king's treasures, with a great part of the richest plunder of the churches and shops, he bestowed the rest upon the priests, barons, knights, and soldiers, according to their rank, and the nature of the bargain they had made with him before leaving Normandy. Some received estates and castles, some the sovereignty of towns and villages, some were paid in money, and some obtained the hand of Saxon ladies, whose husbands or fathers had been killed at the battle of Hastings. The native population indiscriminately, but especially those who had taken part against the Conqueror, were mercilessly robbed of their houses, their lands, and their wealth. 'The towns,' says Thierry, 'suffered in a different manner from the country; and each town or district had its own particular grievances. At Pevensey, for example, where the Norman army

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had landed, the soldiers shared among themselves the houses of the vanquished. In other places the inhabitants themselves were portioned out like chattels. The city of Dover, half-consumed by fire, was given to Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, who in turn distributed the houses among his warriors and followers. Raoul de Courpespine received three houses, and a poor woman's field; William, son of Geoffrey, also received three houses, along with the town-house, or hall of the burgesses. Near Colchester, in Essex, Geoffrey de Mandeville seized forty manors or houses, surrounded by cultivated lands; fourteen Saxon proprietors were dispossessed by a Norman called Engelry; one rich Englishman placed himself for security under the protection of Gaultier, a Norman; another Englishman became a serf on the soil of his own field.' So it was over all the conquered district; the sixty thousand Normans who had come over with William settling down like a band of nobles in the midst of a population of serfs. Some of the Saxons, indeed, may have been permitted to retain their rank and wealth; but these cases were the exceptions; and the meanest soldier in William's army found himself raised, both in wealth and station, above the descendants of the most powerful of the Anglo-Saxon thanes. 'The man who had crossed the sea with the quilted cassock and wooden bow of a common foot-soldier, now appeared mounted on a war-horse, and bearing the military baldrick; and the herdsmen of Normandy and the weavers of Flanders became in England men of consequence.' As yet, however, only a part of England had been conquered; and when the rest should have been subdued, the followers of William might expect still greater rewards. Allured by these hopes, crowds of new adventurers poured into England from the continent, to offer their arms and services to the Conqueror.

Before pushing the Conquest into the northern and western districts of England, William paid a visit to Normandy, carrying with him, as hostages for the peace of the kingdom during his absence, the principal Anglo-Saxon nobility, and leaving William Fitzosborne, and Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, as his lieutenants. He had scarcely gone when the Saxons of the conquered districts of Kent and Herefordshire revolted against their Norman oppressors; and as the Cambrians or Welsh of the extreme west of England seemed disposed to assist their ancient enemies, the Anglo-Saxons, against the new invaders of the island, the insurrection appeared very formidable. William, accordingly, hastened back from Normandy, and after spending some time in soothing and conciliating the Saxons of London and the neighbourhood, by large promises and cunning proclamations, he marched westward into the provinces which still remained unconquered. Somerset, Devon, Gloucester, and other counties of the south-west, were speedily reduced, and divided, like the eastern counties, among the fortunate soldiers of the Conqueror. By the year 1068, the whole of England south of

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the Ouse and Severn had been effectually subdued and garrisoned by the Normans ; there remained, however, the extensive provinces north of these rivers which still preserved their independence, and afforded a retreat for all the patriots of the south whom the Conqueror had dispossessed of their lands and forced to flee. Here the Northumbrian chiefs Edwin and Morkar, the brothers-in-law of King Harold, a young Saxon named Edrick, and many other patriots, some of whom had sworn never again to sleep under a roof until their country should be delivered out of the strangers' hands, were constantly engaged in schemes and plots for the expulsion of the Normans. A close alliance was formed for this purpose between the Saxons and the Welsh of the west of Mercia, who generously forgot that, on the present occasion, the Anglo-Saxons were suffering precisely what, six hundred years before, they had themselves inflicted on the Celtic British. Besides the Welsh, the Anglo-Saxons found another ally in the Scotch, under their king, Malcolm Canmore, in whose dominions the young Saxon king, Edgar Atheling, with his mother and his two sisters, sought a refuge. Malcolm—a monarch of great abilities, and who, from an early period of his reign, had made it a part of his policy, for the civilisation of his own kingdom, to admit into it all strangers who chose to come—received the refugees kindly, gave them lands in the Lothians, and, in token of his friendship for the Saxons, married Edgar's younger sister Margaret, a princess of extraordinary accomplishments for that period.

Hearing of this triple alliance between the Anglo-Saxons, the Welsh, and the Scotch, William marched northwards, and, victorious wherever he advanced, took in succession the towns of Oxford, Warwick, Leicester, Derby, Nottingham, Lincoln, and York. After the siege of York, an incident occurred which Thierry thus narrates : “Eldred, Archbishop of York, who had lent his assistance at the consecration of the foreign king, came into the desolated city to perform some religious ceremony. When he came, he sent to his lands, not far from the city, for some provisions for his household. His servants, driving wagons laden with corn and other articles, were met at one of the gates of York by the Norman governor with a numerous escort. “Who are you?” demanded the Norman; “and to whom do these supplies belong?” “We are,” said they, “the archbishop's servants, and these provisions are for the use of his household.” The viscount, paying no respect to this intimation, made a sign to his soldiers to seize the horses and wagons, and carry the provisions to the Norman magazines. When the archbishop, the friend and ally of the conquerors, found that even he did not escape the miseries of the Conquest, there arose in his soul an indignation which his calm and prudent spirit had never experienced before. He immediately repaired to the Conqueror's quarters, and presented himself in his episcopal habits, with his pastoral staff in his hand. William rose, according to custom, to give the archbishop

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the kiss of peace ; but the Saxon stepped back, and said : " Hear me, King William. Thou wert a foreigner ; nevertheless, because it was God's will to punish this nation, thou didst obtain, at the cost of much blood, the kingdom of England. Then I anointed thee king ; I crowned thee ; I blessed thee with mine own hands ; but now I curse thee and thy race, because thou hast deserved it ; because thou art the persecutor of God's church, and the oppressor of its ministers." The Norman attendants of William had their swords half unsheathed, and would have killed the old man ; but William allowed him to depart.'

For two years York was the northernmost post of the Normans, and Northumbria continued in the possession of the Saxon patriots. Many attempts were made by the latter, assisted by the Welsh, the Scotch, and also by a Danish fleet sent to their aid by Sweyn, king of Denmark, to regain what they had lost ; and one of these was so successful, that York came again into their possession, and Edgar Atheling was again saluted as king in the northern provinces. This success was partly owing to the diminished enthusiasm of the Normans in the cause of the Conquest, many of whom, instead of settling in the country, had taken the earliest opportunity of re-embarking for their native land, carrying along with them the riches which they had acquired. In 1070, however, William made a second expedition into the north, and before his activity and the valour of his troops all opposition gave way. Cumberland and Northumberland were reduced ; Edgar and some of his followers fled again into Scotland ; while the great patriot chiefs, Waltheof, Edwin, Morkar, and Cospatrick, were obliged to submit to the Conqueror. At the end of that year the whole of England, from Land's End to Tweed, was virtually conquered by the Normans.

FATE OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS—SOCIAL EFFECTS OF THE CONQUEST.

After the completion of the Conquest, in the year 1070, the Anglo-Saxons may be considered as dividing themselves into three classes—the great mass of the population, which lived groaning under the Norman yoke ; the patriot outlaws, who swarmed in the forests and less accessible districts of the country, and waged a perpetual war with the foreigners, leading a free but savage and precarious life ; and the exiles, who, quitting their native land, scattered themselves in search of liberty over all parts of the world. Of the first class—the great mass of the subdued Saxon population—a little more must be said.

Now that he was firmly seated on the throne, William pursued with even greater rigour and consistency than before his policy of degrading the natives of the country which he had conquered. In 1070, William, intriguing with Pope Alexander II., procured the

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assembling of an ecclesiastical council at Winchester, presided over by two papal legates, at which Stigand, the Saxon Archbishop of Canterbury, was deposed, along with Alexander, Bishop of Lincoln; Eghelman, Bishop of East Anglia; Eghelrik, Bishop of Sussex; Eghelwin, Bishop of Durham; and almost every other ecclesiastical dignitary of the English race. These prelates were replaced by Norman priests; the archbishopric of Canterbury being conferred on Lanfranc, to whose services at Rome, as we formerly mentioned, William had been greatly indebted. Eldred, the Archbishop of York, having died, a Norman prelate, Thomas, was appointed his successor. The simultaneous deposition of so many of the Saxon clergy excited a deep interest in the ecclesiastical world, and it is probable that some complaints might have been heard but for the accession of Hildebrand to the papacy. He declared the deposition legitimate, and the discussion was at an end. The last prelate of English birth left in England was Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester, a weak simple man, of amiable disposition, who had assisted the Conqueror more zealously than any other Saxon. Even his deposition was at length resolved on. Accordingly, in 1076, he was summoned before a council of Norman prelates and nobles, held in Westminster Abbey, King William and Archbishop Lanfranc presiding. It was here unanimously voted that Wulfstan was unfit to continue Bishop of Worcester, seeing that he could not speak French; and he was required, therefore, to surrender his episcopal ring and crosier. On this demand being made, the weak old man was inspired with an energy superior to his character: his lean frame quivered, and rising up before all the assembly, he walked slowly up to the tomb of Edward the Confessor, who was interred beneath the abbey pavement, and standing by the tombstone, said, addressing the dead monarch beneath: 'Edward, I received this staff from thee, and I return it to thee again.' Then turning to the Normans, he said: 'A better than you gave me this staff, to whom now I give it back; take it up if you can.' At these words he struck the tombstone with the end of his crosier, and the Normans, impressed with a superstitious awe, did not venture to repeat their demand; nay, according to the popular tradition, the staff clove the stone, and stuck in it so firmly that no one but Wulfstan himself could pull it out, which he did when the king bade him resume it. This miracle was generally believed; and after his death, which took place shortly after, Wulfstan was worshipped as a saint by the Saxons.

The most immediate and remarkable result of the Conquest was the introduction of what is called the *feudal system* into England. Under the Anglo-Saxon dynasty, few traces of this system existed—the government being popular in its character. When, however, William had conquered England, there resulted from his partition of the territory among his followers a new set of social arrangements. Reserving one thousand four hundred and twenty-two manors to

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himself as his private share, he divided the rest of the kingdom among seven or eight hundred of his principal followers, who became bound, in return, to render him homage and military service. These great barons, who were called tenants-in-chief, let out their lands on similar terms to their dependants, and so on until every Norman was provided for. On consulting the Great Roll of the Normans, called also the Domesday-book, which William caused to be made out between 1081 and 1086, for the purpose of ascertaining into whose hands all the lands of England had got, only one or two Saxon names are found in the list of tenants-in-chief, and these for very small estates; from which it appears that all the former proprietors of England—the Anglo-Saxon thanes and ceorls—had been degraded into tenants of the Norman barons, or even, lower still, into tenants of Norman knights, who were tenants themselves. The lower class of the Anglo-Saxons, again, became absolute serfs of the soil—villains, cottars, and bonders under Norman masters.

Thus, in the end of the eleventh century, there came to be two distinct populations in England—a Norman population, consisting probably at first of not more altogether than a hundred and fifty thousand men, and an Anglo-Saxon population of some millions. Of the mixture of these two populations, the present English nation is the result. The mixture did not take place at once. For two or even three centuries after the Conquest, we can distinguish the two populations. To understand the state of society in England immediately after the Conquest, the reader, in the words of Thierry, 'must imagine to himself two countries—the one possessed by the Normans, wealthy and exonerated from capitation and other taxes; the other, that is, the Saxon, enslaved and oppressed with a land-tax: the former full of spacious mansions, of walled and moated castles; the latter covered with thatched huts and old ruined walls: this peopled with the prosperous and idle, with soldiers and courtiers, with knights and barons—that with men miserable, and doomed to toil with peasants and artisans. Lastly, to complete the picture, these two lands are in a manner woven into each other; they meet at every point, and yet they are more completely separated than if there were seas between them. Each has a language of its own, which is strange to the other. French is the court language, used in all the palaces, castles, and mansions, in the abbeys and monasteries, in all the residences of wealth and power; while the ancient language of the country is heard only at the firesides of the poor and the serfs.'

In the process of time these differences disappeared, and the two populations amalgamated with each other, constituting our present English people. Even at the present day, however, it is maintained by some that the higher classes of the country exhibit traces of their Norman descent, while the lower classes are in a much greater degree the genuine descendants of the Anglo-Saxons.



LIFE OF ALEXANDER SELKIRK.

ALLEXANDER SELKIRK, the undoubted original of Defoe's celebrated character, Robinson Crusoe, was born in the year 1676, in the village of Largo, on the southern coast of the county of Fife in Scotland. The name of Selkirk (or Selcraig, which was the old mode of spelling it, and which the subject of our narrative did not exchange for Selkirk till after leaving his native place to go to sea) is not an uncommon one in the village, the population of which now considerably exceeds two thousand. John Selkirk, the father of Alexander, was a thriving shoemaker, who lived in a house of his own, which has since been pulled down, at the west end of the town. He appears to have been a man of strict temper, respected for his steady and religious character, and, like the majority of Scottish parents at that time, a severe disciplinarian in his family. The name of his wife, the mother of our hero, was Euphan Mackie, also, it would seem, a native of Largo, and reported by tradition to have been the very contrast of her husband in her parental conduct—as yielding and indulgent as he was rigorous. In the case of Alexander, however, there was a special reason why Mrs Selkirk should prove a kind and pliant mother. Not only was she considerably advanced in years at the time of his birth, but, by a chance not very common, he was her seventh son, born without an intermediate daughter, and therefore destined, according to an old Scottish superstition, to come to great fortune, and make a figure in the world. Mrs Selkirk, good easy woman, firmly believed this, and made no doubt that her son

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Sandie was to be the great man of the family. He was therefore her pet ; and the greater part of her maternal care, in respect to his education, consisted in confidential discourses with him by the fire-side when the rest of the family were absent, and in occasional consultations how they should screen some little misdemeanour from the eyes of his father.

Young Selkirk was a clever enough boy, and quickly learned all that was taught at the school of his native town. Besides reading, writing, and arithmetic, he is said to have made considerable progress in navigation—a branch of knowledge likely to be of some repute in Largo, not only on account of its being a sea-coast town, with a considerable fishing population, but also in consequence of its having been the birthplace and property of Sir Andrew Wood, a distinguished Scottish admiral of the preceding century, whose nautical fame and habits must have produced considerable impression on it. At all events, whether owing to the ideas he received at school, or to the effect on his mind of the perpetual spectacle of the sails in Largo Bay, and of his constant association with the Largo fishermen, Selkirk early determined to follow a seafaring life. Either out of a disposition to let the boy have his own will, or as thinking the life of a sailor the likeliest way to the attainment of the great fortunes which she anticipated for her son, his mother favoured his intention ; his father, however, opposed it strenuously, and was anxious, now that his other sons were all settled in life, that his youngest should remain at home, and assist him in his own trade. This and young Selkirk's wayward and obstinate conduct seem to have kept him and his father perpetually at war ; and a descendant of the family used to shew a walking-stick which the old man is said to have applied to the back of his refractory son, with the affirmation : ' A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back ' Notwithstanding the boy's restless character, respect for his father's wishes kept him at home for a considerable time : a father's malediction being too awful a thing for even a seventh son to brave with impunity.

The first thirteen years of Selkirk's life coincide with the hottest period of the religious persecutions in Scotland. He would be about three years of age at the time of the assassination of Archbishop Sharp, which took place at not a very great distance from Largo ; and the chief subject of interest, during his boyhood, in Fife, as in the other counties of Scotland, was the position of the church, then filled by Episcopalian and indulged clergy, greatly to the disgust of the people. What part old Selkirk and his family may have taken during the time when it was dangerous to shew attachment to Presbytery—whether they professed themselves Covenanters, or whether, as is more probable, they yielded a reluctant attendance at the parish church—cannot be ascertained ; but the following entry in the parish records of Largo, referring to the year 1689, immediately after the

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Revolution had sealed the restoration of Presbytery in Scotland, will shew that if they did attend the parish church, it was not out of lukewarmness to the popular cause, or affection for the established clergyman : ' Sabbath, — 1689.—Which day, the minister being obstructed in his duty, and kept out of the church by a great mob armed with staves and bludgeons, headed by John Selkirk, divided what money there was amongst the poor, and retired from his charge.' John Selkirk, who thus signalised himself by heading the mob for the expulsion of the conforming clergyman, was the eldest brother of our hero, who, however, is reported himself to have testified his enthusiasm by flourishing a stick with the other boys. This outburst of Presbyterian zeal freed Largo from the unpopular clergyman, and in a short time in it, as well as in the other parishes of Scotland, the Presbyterian rule was re-established.

SELKIRK GOES TO SEA—RETURNS TO LARGO—INCURS KIRK CENSURE FOR QUARRELSOME CONDUCT.

One of the first youths in Largo to experience the stricter discipline of Presbytery, whose restoration he had celebrated, was Alexander Selkirk. His high spirits, and want of respect for any control, led him, it would appear, to be guilty of frequent misbehaviour during divine service ; for under date the 25th of August 1695 is the following entry in the parish records : ' Alexander Selcraig, son of John Selcraig, elder, cited to appear before the session for indecent conduct in church.' This seems to have been more than our hero, now in his nineteenth year, could submit to. The elder's son to appear before the session, and be rebuked for laughing in church ! Within twenty-four hours after this terrible citation, the young shoemaker was gone ; he had left Largo and the land of kirk-sessions behind him, and was miles away at sea. When the kirk-session met, they were obliged to be content with inserting the following paragraph in the record : ' August 27th.—Alexander Selcraig called out ; did not appear, having gone to sea.' Resolved, however, that he should not escape the rebuke which he had merited, they add : ' Continued until his return.'

The return which the kirk-session thus looked forward to did not take place for six years, during which we have no account of Selkirk's adventures, although the probability is that he served with the buccaneers, who then scoured the South Seas. To have persisted in calling the young sailor to account for a fault committed six years before, would have been too great severity. The kirk-session, accordingly, do not seem to have made any allusion to the circumstance which had driven him to sea ; but it was not long before a still more disgraceful piece of misconduct than the former brought him under their censure. The young sailor, coming home, no doubt, with his character rendered still more reckless and boisterous than

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before by the wild life to which he had been accustomed at sea, was hardly a fit inmate for a sedate and orderly household, and quarrels and disturbances became frequent in the honest shoemaker's cottage. One of these domestic uproars brought the whole family before the session: the peace and good order of families being one of the things which were then taken cognisance of by the ecclesiastical authorities in every parish. The circumstances are thus detailed in the session records: 'November 1701.—The same day, John Guthrie delated John Selcraig, elder, and his wife Euphan Mackie, and' [his son] 'Alexander Selcraig, for disagreement together; and also John Selcraig' [Alexander's eldest brother], 'and his wife Margaret Bell. All of them are ordered to be cited against next session, which is to be on the 25th instant.'

Agreeably to this citation the parties appeared—the father, the mother, the eldest son and his wife, and our hero. On this occasion, John Selcraig, the elder, 'being examined what was the cause of the tumult that was in his house, said he knew not; unless that Andrew Selcraig' [another of the old man's sons who lived in the house, and who was but half-witted] 'having brought in a can full of salt water, of which his brother Alexander did take a drink through mistake, and he' [Andrew] 'laughing at him for it, his brother Alexander came and beat him, upon which he ran out of the house, and called his brother John' [John and his wife, Margaret Bell, would appear to have lived in a neighbouring house; and Andrew had run into it to call his brother]. 'Being again questioned what made him' [Selkirk the father] 'sit upon the floor with his back at the door, he said it was to keep down his son Alexander, who was seeking to go up to get down his pistol. And being inquired what he was going to do with it, said he could not tell.' Such was the tenor of the old man's evidence. On the same day the culprit Alexander was called; but he had contrived to go to Cupar, to be out of the way. Directing a second citation to be issued against him for next session, the court proceeded to examine the other witnesses. The younger John Selkirk gave his evidence as follows: 'On the 7th of November last, he being called by his brother Andrew, came to his father's house; and when he entered it, his mother went out; and he, seeing his father sitting upon the floor, with his brother at the door, was much troubled, and offered to help him up; at which time he did see his brother Alexander in the other end of the house casting off his coat, and coming towards him; whereupon his father did get up, and did get betwixt them' [Alexander and John], 'but he did not know what he did besides, his' [John's] 'head being borne down by his brother Alexander; but afterwards, being liberated by his wife, he made his escape.' Margaret Bell, John's wife, who thus courageously rescued her husband from the clutches of Alexander, was next examined. She declared that her husband being called out by his brother Andrew to go to his father's house, she followed him, 'and coming

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into the house, she found the said Alexander gripping both his father and her husband, and she, labouring to loose his hands from her husband's head and breast, her husband fled out of doors, and she followed him, but called back: "You false loon, will you murder your father and my husband both?" whereupon he' [Alexander] followed her to the door; but whether he beat her or not, she was in so great confusion she cannot distinctly say, but ever since she hath had a sore pain in her head.' The last witness examined was Andrew Selkirk, whose laughter at his brother's mistake had been the original cause of the quarrel. Andrew, however, was able to say 'nothing to purpose in the business,' and the further investigation of the matter was adjourned until the next meeting.

The session met again on the 29th of November; and this time the culprit was present. The following is the entry regarding the interview between the future Robinson Crusoe and his ecclesiastical judges: 'Alexander Selcraig, scandalous for contention and disagreeing with his brothers, compeared, and being questioned concerning the tumult that was in his house, whereof he was said to be the occasion, confessed that he having taken a drink of salt water out of a can, his brother Andrew laughing at him for it, he did beat him twice with a staff. He confessed also that he had spoken very ill words concerning his brother; and particularly that he had challenged his elder brother John to a combat of *dry nieves*' [dry fists], 'as he called it, else then, he said, he would not care even to do it now, which afterwards he did refuse.' [The meaning seems to be, that at first he told the session to their face that he would not care even then to challenge his brother, but afterwards retracted the expression.] 'Moreover he said several things; whereupon the session appointed him to compear before the face of the congregation for his scandalous carriage.' This punishment, the greatest disgrace which could be inflicted on a Scotchman of that day, the young sailor actually underwent; for on the next day, Sunday, November 30, 1701, 'Alexander Selcraig, according to the session's appointment, compeared before the pulpit, and made acknowledgment of his sin in disagreeing with his brothers, and was rebuked in the face of the congregation for it, and promised amendment in the strength of the Lord, and so was dismissed.' Did ever this scene of himself, standing abashed on a stool, and suffering a public rebuke before a whole churchful of people, recur to him when, a few years after, he was standing by his hut in his desert island, with his hairy cap on his head, and without a single human face to look round upon? Did he laugh, or did the tears come at the recollection?

Probably Selkirk would not have staid to undergo the punishment inflicted on him by the session, but would have gone off to sea, as on the former occasion, had the season not been too far advanced for him to find a ship. He therefore remained at Largo during the

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winter; whether assisting his father at his trade, or going about idle, we do not know. In the spring of 1702, he seized an opportunity of going to England; and a short time afterwards we find him engaged to proceed with the celebrated Dampier on a buccaneering expedition to the South Seas. That our readers may understand the nature of this expedition, during which that extraordinary event happened to Selkirk which has made his name so famous, it will be necessary to give a brief account of the people called the Buccaneers.

THE BUCCANEERS—SELKIRK JOINS A PRIVATEERING EXPEDITION UNDER DAMPIER—ACCOUNT OF THE VOYAGE.

As is well known, the Spaniards were the first to discover and take possession of the lands in the New World, including the choicest islands of the West Indies and the rich coasts of South America and Mexico. It was not long, however, before adventurers of other nations, especially French, English, and Dutch, pressed into the newly-discovered seas, and attempted to procure a share of the good things with which the American islands and shores abounded. The Spaniards, whose savage cruelties to the unfortunate natives of the lands they had discovered had made them absolute lords of every portion of American ground on which they had planted themselves, resisted the new-comers with all their strength; attacked their ships, drove them out of the spots where they endeavoured to found their small settlements, and in a hundred other ways annoyed and injured them. The consequence was, that the English, French, and Dutch adventurers who had congregated in the West Indian Archipelago were unable to settle down permanently in any place, but were obliged to keep up a continual war with the Spaniards, in order to maintain their existence. Hayti, or San Domingo, being the earliest and most flourishing of the Spanish settlements, became the principal haunt of these rivals and enemies of the Spaniards. A number of French adventurers, whom the Spaniards in their narrow jealousy had driven out of the island of St Christopher, took up their headquarters in the small island of Tortuga, adjoining the northern coast of San Domingo, and convenient as a station from which they could make expeditions into the latter island, for the purpose of hunting the wild cattle and swine with which it swarmed. This of course increased the animosity of the Spaniards, who resented these incursions upon their territory, and attacked the intruders without mercy whenever they surprised them in the woods of San Domingo. Compelled thus to associate themselves for mutual safety in bands of considerable force, and joined by adventurers of other nations, the *Buccaneers*, as the French were called, from the custom of *buccaning* or drying and smoking the

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flesh of the animals which they killed, became a formidable body. Many of them, tired of the miserable life which they led on shore, embarked in vessels, and sought a desperate but congenial occupation in attacking and plundering the richly-laden ships which were constantly sailing, from the Spanish colonies to the mother-country. Allured by the charms of this lawless mode of life, fresh adventurers arrived from France and England in ships fitted out for the purpose, with the permission of the French and English governments, both of which were eager to damage the Spanish interests; and thus, towards the conclusion of the seventeenth century, the West Indian Archipelago and the shores of South America swarmed with crews of pirates, who, under the name of privateers, chased every merchant-vessel that made its appearance. When they came up with such a vessel quitting an American harbour, they boarded her with the most reckless audacity, either murdered the sailors and passengers, or made them prisoners, and shared the cargo according to their own rules of equity. In consequence of their ravages, the Spanish colonists in the New World became less and less disposed to risk their property in commerce, and the intercourse which had hitherto been kept up between the colonies and the mother-country was greatly interrupted. Disappointed of prizes at sea, the buccaneers did not hesitate to make up for the loss by storming and plundering the Spanish settlements on the American coasts. Landing in the night-time on the beach, close by some ill-guarded town or village, they would surprise the inhabitants while asleep, and either carry off all the wealth they could find, or sell back their own property to the wretched inhabitants for a heavy ransom. The buccaneers were, in fact, a floating nation of robbers; a revival in more modern times of the Norwegian sea-kings. They had their own rude notions of justice; they even professed religion in the midst of their licentiousness; and many of them never gave chase to a flag without falling on their knees on the deck to pray God that he would grant them the victory and a valuable cargo. The more respectable among them defended their mode of life, by saying that the injuries they perpetrated upon the Spaniards were a just retribution upon that nation for their cruelties to the Indians, or sought shelter under the general usage of the time, which authorised the various governments of Europe to grant licenses to private adventurers to harass and destroy the ships and ports belonging to nations with which they were at war. These excuses, joined with the love of adventure and the desire of wealth, the prospect of attaining which was so great in the buccaneering mode of life, operated as motives sufficient to induce a number of persons belonging to families of good repute to engage in the trade; nor did they incur disgrace by so doing. As we have already seen, young Selkirk, although he was the son of a stanch Scottish Presbyterian, and had been subject from his infancy to the wholesome impressions of respectable society, had

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not scrupled to join the rovers of the South Seas. His experience of the toils and dangers of such a life had not cured him of his propensity to adventure; and now, for the second time, he leaves his father's house to become a privateer.

William Dampier, the originator and commander of the expedition which Selkirk now joined, was an Englishman, who had gone to sea at an early age, and for upwards of thirty years had been enduring the innumerable hardships and vicissitudes incident to the life of a sailor in those times. He was a man of ardent mind and great abilities, as the accounts of his voyages which he has left testify; and he had gained more knowledge of the South Seas than any man then living. He had not, however, with all his energy and skill, been very successful in improving his own fortunes; and now, at the age of fifty years, he was planning another expedition, which he hoped would issue in the acquisition of immense riches for all concerned. He found little difficulty in persuading some merchants to fit out two vessels, the *St George* and the *Fame*, each of twenty-six guns, the former to be commanded by himself, the latter by a Captain Pulling; and as war had just been declared against France and Spain, in consequence of a dispute regarding the succession to the crown of the latter, in which Great Britain, Holland, and several other countries ranged themselves against France, he easily obtained the necessary commissions from Prince George, then High Admiral of England, authorising the crews of the two ships to attack and plunder the French and Spaniards for their own profit. Thus entitled, so far as the Lord High Admiral's warrant could entitle them, to grow rich by robbing Frenchmen and Spaniards all over the world, the adventurers listened eagerly to the plans which Dampier proposed as most sure to succeed. The first of these was, that they should sail to the south-eastern coast of South America, proceed up the river La Plata as far as Buenos Ayres, and earn £600,000 at one stroke by capturing the Spanish galleons usually stationed there. Should this plan fail, they were to sail round Cape Horn, and make a privateering cruise as far as the coast of Peru, where they would be likely to fall in with some valuable prizes; and should they fail also in this, they could still find profitable occupation in plundering the Spanish towns along the western coast of South America, waiting for the ship which periodically sailed from the Mexican port of Acapulco, and which would be a splendid capture. Such were the hopes which Dampier held out to the crews. The vessels were victualled for nine months; 'and the articles of agreement were *no purchase, no pay*; or, in other words, the merchants risked the vessels, and the crews their limbs and lives.*

All was prepared for sailing, and the vessels were already in the Downs, when, in consequence of a quarrel between Dampier and

* Howell's *Life of Alexander Selkirk*.

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Pulling, the latter went off alone, intending, he said, to make for the Canary Islands. Neither he nor the ship was ever heard of afterwards. Dampier, on Pulling's departure, lost no time in procuring the equipment of another vessel instead of the *Fame*. The name of the new vessel was the *Cinque Ports*, of about ninety tons burden, with a crew of sixty-three, and carrying sixteen guns. This ship joined the *St George* in the Bay of Kinsale, on the Irish coast, on the 18th of May 1703, and made all haste to proceed on their voyage. Still it was not till the 11th of September that they left Kinsale. The following is the list of the officers of the ships respectively as given by Mr Howell: In the *St George*—William Dampier, captain; John Clipperton, chief-mate; William Funnel, second-mate; and John Ballet, surgeon. In the *Cinque Ports*—Charles Pickering, captain; Thomas Stradling, lieutenant; and *Alexander Selkirk*, sailing-master. The appointment of our hero to so responsible a situation as that of sailing-master indicates considerable confidence in his abilities and seamanship.

On the 25th of September the vessels reached Madeira, and here Dampier had the disappointment of learning that his delay, in consequence of Pulling's desertion, had deprived them of the chance of capturing the galleons in the La Plata river, these ships having already arrived at Teneriffe. The crews then resolved to trust to the chances which the other plans proposed by Dampier might afford. Accordingly, they made straight for the South American coast. The only incident of consequence on the way was the disagreement of Captain Dampier with some of his crew. On the 2d of November they passed the equator, and on the 8th they saw the coast of Brazil.

On the 24th of November they anchored at the island Le Grand, in lat. 23° 30' S. 'It produces,' says William Funnel, the second-mate of the *St George*, who wrote a *Narrative* of the voyage, 'rum, sugar, and several kinds of fruit, but all very dear, on account of supplying the inland town of St Paul with necessaries. Here we wooded, watered, and refitted our ships; and nine of our men falling out with Captain Dampier, left us, and went ashore.' Another incident which happened at Le Grand, and which exercised a bad effect on the remainder of the expedition, was the death of Captain Pickering of the *Cinque Ports*, who was succeeded by his lieutenant, Stradling, a man of ferocious and quarrelsome temper. The death of Pickering, the appointment of Stradling, the frequent altercations between Dampier and his crew, the difference of views which began to be manifested among the sailors as to the best plan for rendering the rest of the voyage successful, all preyed upon the mind of Selkirk to such a degree as to render him disgusted with his situation. He had a dream, it is said, off the coast of Le Grand, which left the firm impression on his mind that the expedition was to be disastrous, and that he ought to take the first opportunity

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of giving up all connection with it. It was not till some time afterwards, however, that he resolved finally to do so.

Leaving Le Grand on the 28th, the vessels continued their voyage southwards; passed the Falkland Isles on the 29th of December, and were encountered by such a storm in rounding Cape Horn, that they lost sight of each other on the 4th of January 1704. They did not fall in with each other again till the 10th of February, when the *St George*, anchoring at the island of Juan Fernandez, after a tedious voyage along the coasts of Patagonia and Chili, found that the *Cinque Ports* had been waiting there for her three days. 'We anchored,' says Funnel, 'in the great bay, in thirty-five fathoms. At this island we wooded, watered, and refitted our ships, giving them a heel, to clean their sides as low as we could, which took up much time, and occasioned both companies to be much on shore. In this island there are abundance of cabbage-trees, which are excellent, though small. The cabbage-tree, which is a species of palm, has a small straight stem, often ninety or a hundred feet long, with many knots or joints, about four inches asunder, like a bamboo cane. It has no leaves, except at the top, in the midst of which the substance called cabbage is contained. The branches of this tree are commonly twelve or thirteen feet in length; and at about a foot and a half from the tree the leaves begin, which are about four feet long, and an inch and a half broad—the leaves growing so regularly that the whole branch seems one entire leaf. The cabbage when cut out from among the roots of the branches, is usually a foot long, and six inches in diameter, and as white as milk. From the bottom of the cabbage there spring out several large bunches of berries, like grapes, each bunch being five or six pounds weight. The berries are red, and about the size of cherries, each having a large stone in the middle, and the pulp tastes like that of haws. On the island we saw also the sea-lion, which is so called, as I suppose, because he roars somewhat like a lion, and his head has also some resemblance to that animal, having four large teeth in front, all the rest being short, thick, and stubbed. Instead of feet and legs, he has four fins, the two foremost serving him, when he goes ashore, to raise the fore-part of the body, and he then draws the hind-part after him. The two hinder fins are of no use on land, but only in the water. The animal is very fat; for which reason we killed several of them, from which we made a tun of oil for our lamps, and while at this island, made use of it also for frying our fish. They have short light-coloured hair when young, becoming sandy when old. Their food is fish, and they prey altogether in the water, but come on land to sleep, when five, six, or more of them huddle together like swine, and will often lie still three or four days if not molested. They are much afraid of men, and make off as fast as they can into the water. If hard pressed, they will turn about, raising their bodies on their fore-fins, and face you with their mouths

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wide open ; so that we used to clap a pistol to their mouths and fire down their throats. Sometimes five or six of us would surround one of these monsters, each having half a pike, and so prick him dead, which commonly was the sport of two or three hours.* Selkirk little thought, while cutting the branches of the cabbage-trees, and hunting sea-lions with Funnel and the other sailors on the beach of Juan Fernandez, that in a short time this island was to be his solitary home.

The life of comparative idleness which the crews of the two ships were leading on the island was not favourable to good-humour or harmony, especially as, hitherto, they had not succeeded in attaining the object of their expedition. The sailors of the *Cinque Ports* quarrelled with their captain, Stradling ; and the dispute at length ran so high, that forty-two men, or more than two-thirds of the crew, went ashore, and threatened to remain. Whether Selkirk, who, as sailing-master, was next in rank to Stradling on board the *Cinque Ports*, was one of those who revolted, is not ascertained ; but the sequel renders it probable that he was. At length Dampier succeeded in reconciling the sailors with their captain, order was restored, and matters went on as usual.

On the 29th of February, the idle crews were roused to activity by the sight of a sail. In their hurry to give chase, they left behind them one of their boats, their anchors, a quantity of oil, and other materials, and, what was more alarming, five sailors and a negro, who happened to be straggling in a part of the island distant from the beach at the time when the sail was seen. Bearing out to sea, they found the strange ship to be a Frenchman of thirty guns. After a long pursuit they came up with her next day, and engaged her very close, the *St George* keeping her broadside to broadside for seven hours. A gale then sprang up, and the Frenchman escaped, disappointing the privateers of their expected booty. Nine of the *St George's* men had been killed, and many more wounded in the action. The crews were, nevertheless, exceedingly anxious to continue the chase ; but Dampier opposed them, saying it was not worth while, and 'they did not need to care for merchantmen, as he could get them a prize of £500,000 any day of the year.' They therefore returned, in no very good humour, to Juan Fernandez, which they came in sight of on the 3d of March. To their surprise, they found two French vessels at anchor off the island, each of thirty-six guns : a sight which made them glad to sheer off, leaving the boat, the anchors, the oil, and the six sailors to their fate. It afterwards appeared that the Frenchmen, on landing, had taken possession of all the stores they found on the island, and made prisoners of four of the six men, the other two managing to conceal themselves.

* Funnel's Narrative.

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Prevented from again taking up their station at Juan Fernandez, the *St George* and the *Cinque Ports* bore away north-east for the coast of Peru, which they came in sight of on the 11th of March. 'Coasting northward along the shore,' says Funnel, 'which is the highest and most mountainous I ever saw, we were surprised, on the 19th of March, to see the waves changed to a red colour for seven or eight leagues, though, on sounding, we had no ground at one hundred and seventy fathoms; but on drawing up some of the water, we found the colour to be owing to a vast quantity of fish-spawn swimming on the surface.' Keeping a constant look-out for vessels to attack, they saw, on the 22d of March, two at some distance, the sternmost of which proved to be the Frenchman which they had chased and fought off Juan Fernandez. They were very eager to capture this vessel, not merely on account of her value, but because, if she reached Lima—the port she seemed to be bound for—her crew would communicate the intelligence that two buccaneering ships were on the coast, and so prevent the merchantmen in that port from sailing. Captain Dampier, however, was averse to attack her; and she escaped, greatly to the discontent of the men, whose fears were in great part realised, and who were only kept from breaking out in rebellion by the capture of two considerable prizes a few days afterwards. Clearing these vessels of the valuable part of their cargo, as well as a bark laden with plank and cordage, which they fell in with on the 11th of April, they let them go, and began to meditate a descent upon some settlement on the coast north of Lima. Santa Maria was the town they resolved to attack, as they expected there to find a great quantity of gold collected from the adjacent mines. On their way to this town from the island of Gallo, which they left on the 17th of April, they captured a small Spanish vessel, on board of which they found a Guernsey man, who had long been a prisoner among the Spaniards. In high spirits with these omens of success, they sailed for Santa Maria, Captain Dampier telling them that, on a former occasion, one hundred and twenty pounds weight of gold had been carried off by a buccaneer from that town, and that, as it was now much larger, the quantity of gold in it must be enormous. They reached the town, and commenced the attack in the night-time. 'The design, however,' says Funnel, 'miscarried, whether from fear, confusion, or the enemy having early intelligence of our motions, which enabled them to cut off many of our men. This is certain, that we became quite sick of our fruitless attempts before the 1st of May, and immediately re-embarked. We were now so short of provisions, that five boiled green plantains were allotted for six men; but when almost out both of hope and patience, a vessel came and anchored close beside us at midnight, which we took without resistance. This proved a most valuable prize, being a ship of one hundred and fifty tons, laden with flour, sugar, brandy, wine, about thirty tons of marmalade

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of quinces, a considerable quantity of salt, and several tons of linen and woollen cloth : so that we had now a sufficient supply of provisions even for four or five years.' On board of this rich prize, to secure an equitable division of the spoil among the crews of the two ships, were placed William Funnell and Alexander Selkirk : the former on behalf of the crew of the *St George*, the latter on behalf of the crew of the *Cinque Ports*.

The buccaneers carried their prize into the Bay of Panama, and anchored with her under the island of Tobago on the 14th of May. 'Here,' says Funnell, 'Captains Dampier and Stradling disagreed, and the quarrel proceeded to such a length, that they could not be reconciled, so that at last it was determined to part company, all the men of both crews being at liberty to go with which captain they pleased. Five of our men went over to Captain Stradling, and five of his men came to us.' It would therefore seem that our hero, Selkirk, had here an opportunity of changing his captain ; and as it is certain that he had no special friendship for Stradling, his not availing himself of the opportunity would indicate that, bad as Stradling was, he preferred him to Dampier. Probably he thought that, by remaining with Stradling, who was more unhesitating in his measures than Dampier, he would sooner grow rich. At all events, he and Funnell, on quitting the prize, resumed their old stations in their respective ships. The prize was abandoned after all that was considered valuable had been taken out of her ; and on the 19th of May 1704, the two ships parted company, never to meet again—the *St George* sailing away in quest of more prizes, the *Cinque Ports* remaining behind. It is with the fate of the latter that we are now to be further concerned ; and as Funnell went with the *St George*, we have no longer his narrative to guide us.

SELKIRK LEFT BY THE CINQUE PORTS ON JUAN FERNANDEZ— DESCRIPTION OF THE ISLAND.

For three months the *Cinque Ports* kept cruising along the shores of Mexico, Guatemala, and Equatorial America, like a villainous vulture watching the horizon for its prey. No ships, however, appeared to reward the greedy activity of the crew ; and at length, in the end of August, Stradling resolved to turn southward, and make for Juan Fernandez, to take in provisions and refit. Meanwhile, as was natural among so many men of savage character cooped up idle in a vessel, all was dissension on board. Stradling and Selkirk especially were, to use a common phrase, at daggers-drawing ; now in loud and angry dispute below, now scowling sullenly at each other on deck. Selkirk resolved to leave the vessel as soon as an opportunity offered. Accordingly, when, in the beginning of September, they came in sight of Juan Fernandez, and the two men who had been living on the island since the beginning

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of March—when, it will be remembered, the *St George* and *Cinque Ports* had been obliged to sheer off without being able to pick them up—made their appearance, healthy and strong as ever, and delighting their old companions with an account of how they had spent the seven months of their solitary reign, eating fruit in abundance, chasing goats, and hunting seals, the idea flashed across his mind that he would take their place, and leaving the vessel to sail away without him, remain the possessor of Juan Fernandez. By what process of imagination he flattered himself that such a life would be agreeable—whether he finally adopted his resolution in a fit of unthinking enthusiasm, such as sometimes leads to strange and whimsical acts, or whether his differences with Stradling, and his disgust with his situation on board the *Cinque Ports*, were really such that escape by any method seemed advisable, cannot now be known; but, at all events, the conclusion was, that when the vessel was ready to leave the island, Selkirk signified his intention of remaining. Stradling made no objections: a boat was lowered; Selkirk descended into it with all his effects; three or four men rowed him ashore under the direction of the captain, the crew of the *Cinque Ports* looking on from the deck. Selkirk leaped on the beach; his effects were lifted out after him by the sailors, and laid in a heap; they shook hands with him heartily, the captain standing in the boat, and bidding them make haste. The sailors jumped in, and the boat was pushed off. Poor Selkirk! he had felt a bound, an exultation of spirit at the moment of stepping on shore; but now, as the boat was shoved off, and the men sat down to the oars with their faces towards him, pride, anger, resolution, all gave way; the horrors of his situation rose at once to his view, and rushing into the surf up to the middle, he stretched out his hands towards his comrades, and implored them to come back and take him on board again. With a jeering laugh, the brutal commander bade him stick to his resolution, and remain where he was, adding that it was a blessing for the crew to have got rid at last of so troublesome a fellow. The boat accordingly went off to the ship; and in a short time the *Cinque Ports* was out of sight. Selkirk remained on the beach beside his bundles, gazing after her till it grew dark.

Juan Fernandez, the island on which our poor Scotchman was thus cast ashore, is situated in lat. $33^{\circ}45'$ S., and long. 79° W., about four hundred miles west of the coast of Chili. The name is properly applied to a group of islands consisting of two larger and a few smaller; and the name now given to that inhabited by Selkirk, and which is the largest of the group, is Mas-a-tierra. The island was first discovered in 1572 by a Spanish navigator, who conferred on it his own name of Juan Fernandez; and for a short time it was inhabited by a small colony of Spaniards, who ultimately abandoned it, however, to settle on the mainland. Afterwards, as we have *already seen*, it became a resort of such buccaneering vessels as

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required, during their cruises on the west coast of America, to put in to some safe harbour to victual and refit. Once or twice, by a similar accident to that which we have described in the case of the six sailors who were left by the *St George* and the *Cinque Ports* in their hurry to give chase to the French merchantman, the island had become the residence of a castaway buccaneer, who was afterwards picked off by a passing ship. Thus, says a voyager, whom we shall have yet to quote more at large, 'Ringrose, in his account of the voyage of Captain Sharp and other buccaneers, mentions one who had escaped ashore on this island out of a ship, which was cast away with all the rest of the company, and says he lived five years alone, before he had the opportunity of another ship to carry him off. Captain Dampier also talks of a Mosquito Indian that belonged to Captain Watlin, who, being a-hunting in the woods when the captain left the island, lived there three years alone, till Captain Dampier came hither in 1684 and carried him off.' Whatever amount of truth there may be in these particular statements as to Juan Fernandez, it is certain that Selkirk's solitary residence on this island was by no means the first instance of the kind. It does not appear to have been an uncommon thing for a buccaneer in those days to be either cast ashore on a desert island by the chances of shipwreck, or to be purposely left upon one by his captain, out of savage ill-will, or as a punishment for mutinous conduct. Perhaps, if the records of old voyages were thoroughly searched, instances might be found of the kind as extraordinary as Selkirk's, if not more so. The magic touch, however, of the hand of a genius has conferred a celebrity on the history of the Fifeshire mariner which distinguishes him from all other Crusoes.

To proceed with our description of Juan Fernandez. The island is of an irregular form, eighteen miles long, and about six broad—larger than the island of Bute. 'The south-west side,' says the voyager already quoted, 'is much the longest, and has a small island about a mile long lying near it, with a few visible rocks close under the shore. On this side begins a ridge of high mountains, that run across from the south-west to the north-west of the island; and the land that lies out in a narrow point to the westward appears to be the only level ground in it. On the north-east side it is very high land, and under it are the two bays where ships always put in to recruit. The best bay is all deep water, and you may carry in ships close to the rocks, if occasion require. The wind blows always over the land, and at worst along shore, which makes no sea. Near the rocks there are very good fish of several sorts, particularly large crawfish under the rocks, easy to be caught; also cavalloes, gropers, and other good fish, in so great plenty anywhere near the shore, that I never saw the like but at the best fishing season in Newfoundland. Pimento is the best timber, and most plentiful on this side of the island, but very apt to split, till a little dried. The cabbage-trees

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abound about three miles into the woods, and the cabbage is very good ; most of them are on the top of the nearest and lowest mountains. The soil in these hills is of a loose black earth ; the rocks are very rotten, so that, without great care, it is dangerous to climb the hills for cabbages ; besides, there are abundance of holes dug in several places by a sort of fowls called puffins, which cause the earth to fall in at once, and endanger the breaking of a man's leg. Our summer months are winter here. In July, snow and ice are sometimes seen ; but the spring, which is in September, October, and November, is very pleasant. There is then abundance of good herbs, as parsley, purslain, &c.* To these descriptions, written about the year 1712, we may add an extract from the account given in Lord Anson's Voyages in 1741, in order that our readers may have a pretty distinct idea of the appearance of the island which, for four years and a half, was to be the home of Selkirk. 'The woods,' says the author of Anson's Voyages, 'cover most of the steepest hills, and are free from all bushes and underwood, offering an easy passage through every part of them ; and the irregularities of the hills and precipices in the northern part of the island trace, by their various combinations, a number of romantic valleys, most of which have a stream of the clearest water running through them, tumbling in cascades from rock to rock. Some particular spots occur in these valleys where the shade of the contiguous woods, the loftiness of the overhanging rocks, and the transparency and frequent falls of the streams, present scenes of wonderful beauty.'

SELKIRK'S RESIDENCE IN JUAN FERNANDEZ.

For many days after the departure of the *Cinque Ports*, Selkirk remained lingering about the spot where he was put ashore, unable to abandon the hope that Stradling would relent and come back for him. His constant occupation was gazing out into the sea. As soon as morning dawned, he began his watch, sitting on his chest ; and his deepest grief was when the evening came on, so that he could see no longer. Sleep came upon him by snatches, and against his exertions to remain awake. Food he did not think of, till extreme hunger obliged him ; and then, rather than go in search of the fruits and game which the woods afforded, he contented himself with the shell-fish and seals' flesh, which he could obtain without removing from the beach. The sameness of the diet, the want of bread and salt, and the sinking sickness of his heart, caused him to loathe his food, so that he ate but at long intervals. Weary, and with aching eyes, he lay down at night, leaning his back against his bundles, listening to the crashing sound of rocks frequently falling among the woods, and to the discordant bleating of the shoals of seals along

* *Voyage by Captain Woodes Rogers in 1708-9.*

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the shore. The horrors of his situation were augmented during the dark by superstitious alarms. Amid the murmur of the waves he could fancy he heard howlings and whistlings, as of spirits in the air: if he turned his head to the black and wooded masses behind him, they seemed peopled and in motion; and as he again turned it to the shore, phantoms stalked past. Often he cursed himself for the folly of the resolution which had brought him here; often, in the frenzy of fear, he would start up with the horrible determination of suicide; but a rush of softer feeling would come, and then he became calm. At length this gentler state of mind grew habitual; thoughts and impressions which had been familiar to him in childhood again came up; and the years which he had spent with brawling and ferocious shipmates, in the lawless profession of a privateer, were swept out of his memory like a disagreeable dream.

With the return of equanimity, Selkirk began to consider the means of rendering his residence on the island endurable. It was the month of October—a season corresponding in that locality to the middle of spring with us—and all was blooming and fragrant. The possibility of starving was not one of the horrors which his situation presented; and when he recovered calmness of mind sufficient to take a view of his solitary domain, he found himself in the midst of plenty. Besides the fish and seals which swarmed round the shores of the island, there were innumerable fruits and vegetables in the woods, among which was the never-failing cabbage-tree; and hundreds of goats skipped wild among the hills. Almost all the means of ordinary physical comfort were within his reach; and he had only to exert his strength and ingenuity to make the island yield him its resources. How he proceeded to do this; the various shifts and devices which he fell upon to supply his wants, and to add gradually to his store of comforts; the succession of daily steps and contrivances by which, in the course of four years and a half, he raised himself from comparative helplessness to complete dominion over the resources of his little territory; and, along with this, the various stages which his feelings went through, from the agony and stupefaction of the first night which he spent on the island, to the perfect freedom and happiness which he ultimately attained—we have not sufficient materials to be able to describe in detail. It is needless to say that the matchless narrative of Defoe is almost entirely a fiction, so far as the details of his hero's daily life in the desert island are concerned. Alexander Selkirk did not display such a genius for mechanical contrivances as Robinson Crusoe, or at least if he did, no record of his contrivances has been preserved. The island was not visited by cannibal savages, as is the case in the romance; no faithful Friday appeared to cheer the hours of the solitary; nor is there any journal preserved from which we learn whether ever such an incident occurred as the discovery of the mysterious foot-print in the sand. All these ornaments of the story

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the world owes to Defoe, whose object was not to write the history of Selkirk, or any other known castaway, but to describe, by the force of imagination, the life of an ideal hero on an ideal desert island. At the same time, there is no doubt that Defoe's narrative fills up our conception of Selkirk's long residence in his island with details such as must actually be true; and at all events there is a correspondence in some points between it and Selkirk's own account of his manner of life, furnished after his return to England to Sir Richard Steele and others, through whom it was made public. The particulars of this narrative, so far as it extends, we proceed to relate.

The stores which Selkirk had brought ashore consisted, besides his clothing and bedding, of a firelock, a pound of gunpowder, a quantity of bullets, a flint and steel, a few pounds of tobacco, a hatchet, a knife, a kettle, a flip-can, a Bible, some books of devotion, and one or two concerning navigation, and his mathematical instruments. Such were the few implements and substances from the great civilised world which Selkirk had to help him in the task of subduing to his own convenience so many square miles of earth and wood. Yet, in the possession of that small package, what strength lay in his hands, and how superior was he to the savage children of nature! Within the small compass of his chest was wrapped up the condensed skill and wisdom of ages, the ingenuity and industry of hundreds of men who had long gone to their graves. The flint and steel, the firelock, the gunpowder, the knife and hatchet, what power over nature was there not compact in these articles!—the mathematical instruments, of what knowledge were they not the symbols!—and, above all, the Bible, and the books which accompanied it, what wealth of conversation, what health of spirit, did they not bring with them!

The first object that occupied his attention, besides the daily supply of such food as was necessary for his subsistence, was the construction of a dwelling to serve him as a shelter from the weather. Selecting a spot at some distance from the beach, he cut down pimento-wood, and in a short time built a hut in which he could reside. To this he afterwards added another. They were both constructed during the first eighteen months of his residence; but the task of improving them, and adding to their neatness, was a constant occupation to him during his stay on the island. The larger of his two huts, which 'was situated near a spacious wood, he made his sleeping-room, spreading the bedclothes he had brought with him upon a frame of his own construction; and as these wore out, or were used for other purposes, he supplied their places with goat-skins. The smaller hut, which he had erected at some distance from the other, was used by him as a kitchen, in which he dressed his victuals. The furniture was very scanty, but consisted of every convenience his island could afford. His most valuable article was

the pot or kettle he had brought from the ship to boil his meat in ; the spit was his own handiwork, made of such wood as grew upon the island ; the rest was suitable to his rudely constructed habitation. The pimento-wood, which burns very bright and clear, served him both for fuel and candle. It gives out an agreeable perfume when burning. He obtained fire, after the Indian method, by rubbing two pieces of pimento-wood together until they ignited. This he did, as he was ill able to spare any of his linen for tinder, time being of no value to him, and the labour rather an amusement !* The necessity of providing for his wants had the effect of diverting his thoughts from the misery of his situation ; yet every day, for the first eighteen months, he spent more or less time on the beach, watching for the appearance of a sail upon the horizon. At the end of that time, partly through habit, partly through the influence of religion, which here awakened in full force upon his mind, he became reconciled to his situation. Every morning after rising he read a portion of Scripture, sang a psalm, and prayed, speaking aloud, in order to preserve the use of his voice. He afterwards remarked that, during his residence on the island, he was a better Christian than he had ever been before, or would probably ever be again. He at first lived much upon turtles and crawfish, which abounded upon the shores—his powder, with which he could shoot the goats of the island, having soon been exhausted : but afterwards he found himself able to run down the goats, whose flesh he either roasted or stewed, and of which he kept a small stock, tamed, around his dwelling, to be used in the event of his being disabled by sickness. One of the greatest inconveniences which afflicted him for the first few months was the want of salt ; but he gradually became accustomed to this privation, and at last found so much relish in unsalted food, that, after being restored to society, it was with equal difficulty that he reconciled himself to take it in any other condition. As a substitute for bread, he had turnips, parsnips, and the cabbage-palm, all of excellent quality, and also radishes and water-cresses. When his clothes were worn out, he supplied their place with goat-skins, which gave him an appearance much more uncouth than any wild animal. He had a piece of linen, from which he made new shirts by means of a nail and the thread of his stockings ; and he never wanted this comfortable piece of attire during the whole period of his residence on the island. Every physical want being thus gratified, and his mind soothed by devotional feeling, he at length began positively to enjoy his existence—often lying for whole days in the delicious bowers which he had formed for himself, abandoned to the most pleasant sensations.

Among the quadruped inhabitants of the isle were multitudes of rats, which at the first annoyed him by gnawing his feet while asleep.

* *Howell's Life of Selkirk.*

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Against this enemy he found it necessary to enter into a treaty, offensive and defensive, with the cats, which also abounded in his neighbourhood. Having caught and tamed some of the latter animals, he was soon freed from the presence of the rats, but not without some disagreeable consequences in the reflection that, should he die in his hut, his friendly auxiliaries would probably be obliged, for their subsistence, to devour his body. He was, in the meantime, able to turn them to some account for his amusement, by teaching them to dance and perform a number of antic feats, such as cats are not in general supposed capable of learning, but which they might probably acquire, if any individual in civilised life were able to take the necessary pains. Another of his amusements was hunting on foot, in which he at length, through healthy exercise and habit, became such a proficient that he could run down the swiftest goat. Some of the young of these animals he taught to dance in company with his kittens; and he often afterwards declared that he never danced with a lighter heart or greater spirit than to the sound of his own voice in the midst of these dumb companions.

Selkirk was careful, during his stay on the island, to measure the lapse of time, and distinguish Sunday from the other days of the week. Anxious, in the midst of all his indifference to society, that, in the event of his dying in solitude, his having lived there might not be unknown to his fellow-creatures, he carved his name upon a number of trees, adding the date of his being left, and the space of time which had since elapsed. When his knife was worn out, he made new ones, and even a cleaver for his meat, out of some hoops which he found on the shore. He several times saw vessels passing the island, but only two cast anchor beside it. Afraid of being taken by the Spaniards, who would have consigned him to hopeless captivity, he endeavoured to ascertain whether these strangers were so or not before making himself known. In both cases he found them enemies; and on one of the occasions, having approached too near, he was observed and chased, and only escaped by taking refuge in a tree.

As Selkirk was only about thirty years of age, and as he found his constitution, which was naturally good, improved and fortified in a wonderful degree by his mode of life, the only cause which he could fear as likely to cut short his days, and prevent him from reaching the old age which he might expect to attain to in his island, provided no ship appeared to carry him off, was the occurrence of some accident, such as might very possibly befall him in his expeditions through the woods. Only one such accident occurred during his stay on the island: it had nearly proved fatal, however. It has already been mentioned that in many parts of the island the soil was loose, and undermined by holes, and the rock weathered almost to rottenness. Pursuing a goat once in one of these dangerous

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places, the bushy brink of a precipice, to which he had followed it, crumbled beneath him, and he and the goat fell together from a great height. He lay stunned and senseless at the foot of the rock for a great while—not less than twenty-four hours, he thought, from the change of position in the sun—but the precise length of time he had no means of ascertaining. When he recovered his senses, he found the goat lying dead beside him. With great pain and difficulty, he made his way to his hut, which was nearly a mile distant from the spot; and for three days he lay on his bed, enduring much suffering. No permanent injury, however, had been done him, and he was soon able to go abroad again.

Four years and four months had elapsed since Selkirk was left by Stradling on the island of Juan Fernandez. It was now the month of January 1709; his reckoning enabled him to know the lapse of time, at least within a week or two. Four times had the January summers of Juan Fernandez passed over his head, and already he was looking forward to the coming of the fifth autumn and winter. The whole island was now familiar to him, with its appearances and productions at various seasons. Custom had reconciled him to it; had almost brought him to regard it as his home; had almost made him cease to remember with regret the world from which he was an outcast. Occasionally, indeed, such thoughts as the poet has supposed must have occurred to him even now, after so long a period of acquaintance with solitude.

‘I am monarch of all I survey;
My right there is none to dispute :
From the centre all round to the sea,
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
O solitude ! where are the charms
That sages have seen in thy face ?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,
Than reign in this horrible place.

I am out of humanity’s reach ;
I must finish my journey alone,
Never hear the sweet music of speech ;
I start at the sound of my own.
The beasts that roam over the plain,
My form with indifference see ;
They are so unacquainted with man,
Their tameness is shocking to me.

Society, friendship, and love,
Divinely bestowed upon man,
Oh, had I the wings of a dove,
How soon would I taste you again !
My sorrows I then might assuage
In the ways of religion and truth,
Might learn from the wisdom of age,
And be cheered by the sallies of youth.

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Religion ! what treasure untold
Resides in that heavenly word !
More precious than silver and gold,
Or all that this earth can afford.
But the sound of the church-going bell
These valleys and rocks never heard,
Never sighed at the sound of a knell,
Or smiled when a Sabbath appeared.

Ye winds, that have made me your sport,
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial endearing report
Of a land I shall visit no more.
My friends, do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me ?
Oh, tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see !

How fleet is a glance of the mind,
Compared with the speed of its flight,
The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift-winged arrows of light !
When I think of my own native land,
In a moment I seem to be there ;
But, alas ! recollection at hand
Soon hurries me back to despair.

But the sea-fowl is gone to her nest,
The beast is laid down in his lair ;
Even here is a season of rest,
And I to my cabin repair.
There's mercy in every place ;
And mercy, encouraging thought !
Gives even affliction a grace,
And reconciles man to his lot.

These thoughts, however, were not habitual. Even the idea of dying alone, and leaving his bones stretched out, to be found some day, at the distance of years, by those whom chance might bring to his mouldering hut in the woods, ceased to affect him sorrowfully. The religious impressions of his childhood had gained a supreme influence over him ; and in communion with his Bible and with his own soul, the solitary man, clad in his goat-skins, became meek, thankful, and tender-hearted. How different from the rough young sailor who, not many years before, had been struggling in the grasp of his brother, his sister-in-law, and his old father on the floor of the cottage in Largo ! Whether the change of character was permanent, we shall now see, as we are about to relate the circumstances which led to his release from his solitude, and his restoration to society.

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FATE OF STRADLING AND DAMPIER—EXPEDITION OF CAPTAIN ROGERS—SELKIRK RELIEVED, AND BROUGHT HOME.

One hope of relief for Selkirk, even if other chances had failed, consisted in the probability that intelligence of his situation would reach England through some of the crew of the *Cinque Ports*, and that some vessel might, in consequence, be induced to pay a passing visit to Juan Fernandez, for the purpose of ascertaining his fate. If Selkirk, however, had relied strongly on this probability, he would have been disappointed. The *Cinque Ports* never reached England. Old, crank, and worm-eaten, she foundered off the coast of Barbacoas not long after setting sail from Juan Fernandez. Out of the whole crew, only Captain Stradling and six or seven of his men were saved; and these were long detained prisoners among the Spaniards at Lima. They were in captivity during the whole time of Selkirk's residence on his island; and long after he had returned to England, most of them were captives still. Stradling at length obtained his liberty, but his ultimate fate was never known.

Deliverance was to reach Selkirk from another quarter. Dampier, who, it will be remembered, had parted company with the *Cinque Ports* about five months before Selkirk had been abandoned by Stradling, had continued his voyage through the South Seas in search of Spanish vessels. Various success had attended him for several months; a considerable portion of his crew forsook him; and at length, crossing the Pacific to the East Indies, he and his companions fell into the hands of the Dutch, who seized his ship and all that he had. The expedition of the *St George* and the *Cinque Ports*, planned by him, had therefore turned out a total failure. 'Dampier returned naked to his owners, with a melancholy relation of his misfortunes, occasioned chiefly by his own strange temper, which was so self-sufficient and overbearing, that few or none of his officers could endure it. Even in this distress he was received as an eminent man, notwithstanding his failings; and was introduced to Queen Anne, having the honour to kiss her hand, and to give her Majesty some account of the dangers he had undergone. The merchants were so sensible of his want of conduct, that they resolved never to trust him any more with a command.*'

The bad success of Dampier's expedition, however, did not prevent the fitting out of another with similar designs against the Spaniards of the South Seas; and about the middle of the year 1708, two vessels, the *Duke* and the *Duchess*, the property of Bristol merchants, set sail for the Spanish Main, having in all three hundred and thirty-three men on board. The *Duke*, a vessel of thirty guns, was commanded by Captain Woodes Rogers, a very able and prudent man; the *Duchess*, of twenty-six guns, by Captain Stephen

* Kerr's Voyages.—Funnell's Narrative.

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Courtney. Poor Dampier, who could not be intrusted with the command, and whose poverty obliged him to accept some occupation of the same kind as that which he had all his life been accustomed to, was glad to sail in the *Duke* in the capacity of pilot to the expedition. Great care had been taken in the manning of both vessels, and regulations had been drawn up before sailing, to prevent disputes.

Captain Rogers, whose proceedings during the voyage it is not necessary for us to detail, pursued the same track as the former expedition; and after cruising along the Brazilian coast, rounded Cape Horn in the month of December 1708, bearing for Juan Fernandez, to take in water. The crews came in sight of the island on the 31st of January 1709, little anticipating the surprise which awaited them. What occurred as they approached is thus related by Captain Rogers himself in the account which he published of the voyage: 'About two o'clock P.M., on the 31st of January, we hoisted our pinnace out; Captain Dover (second captain of the *Duke*), with the boat's crew, went in her to go ashore, though we could not be less than four leagues off. As soon as the pinnace was gone, I went on board the *Duchess*, the crew of which were astonished at our boat attempting to go on shore at so great a distance from land: it was against my inclination, but to oblige Captain Dover, I consented to let her go. As soon as it was dark, we saw a light ashore; our boat was then about a league from the island. She stopped, and bore away again for the ships as soon as she saw the light. We put out lights for the boat, though some were of opinion that the light we saw was not on the island, but the boat's light; but as night came on, it appeared too large for that. We fired one quarter-deck gun and several muskets, shewing lights in our mizzen and fore shrouds, that our boat might find us, whilst we plied in the lee of the island. About two in the morning our boat came on board the *Duchess*: we were glad it got well off, because it began to blow. We were all convinced that the light was on the shore, and designed to make our ships ready to engage, as we believed it to come from French ships at anchor, and that we must either fight them or want water.

'The next day we stood along the south end of the island, in order to lay in with the first southerly wind, which Captain Dampier told us generally blows there all day long. In the morning, being past the island, we tacked, to lay it in close aboard the land; and about ten o'clock, ran close aboard the land that begins to make the north-east side. The flaws came heavy off the shore, and we were forced to reef our topsails when we opened the middle bay, where we expected to find the enemy, but saw all clear, and no ships in that nor the other bay. We guessed there had been ships there, but that they had gone away on sight of us. We sent our yawl ashore about noon with Captain Dover, Mr Fry, and six men all armed:

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meanwhile we and the *Duchess* kept turning to get in. Our boat did not return, so we sent our pinnace with the men armed, to see what was the occasion of the yawl's stay; for we were afraid that the Spaniards had a garrison there, and might have seized it. We put out a signal for our boat, and the *Duchess* shewed a French ensign. Immediately our pinnace returned from the shore, and brought abundance of crawfish, with a man clothed in goat-skins, who looked wilder than the first owners of them.'

Selkirk, the man whose appearance caused such surprise, had seen the sails of the vessels at a distance, but had avoided making any signals which could indicate his presence till he ascertained them to be English. As soon as he had assured himself on this point, his joy was extreme. When night came on, he kindled a large fire on the beach, to inform the strangers that a human being was there. It was this signal which had alarmed the crews of the vessels, and deterred the pinnace from landing. During the night, hope having banished all desire of sleep, he employed himself in killing goats, and preparing a feast of fresh meat for those whom he expected to be his deliverers. In the morning, he found that the vessels had removed to a greater distance, but ere long he saw the boat leave the side of one of them and approach the shore. Selkirk ran joyfully to meet his countrymen, waving a linen rag to attract their attention; and having pointed out to them a proper landing-place, soon had the satisfaction of clasping them in his arms. Joy at first deprived him of that imperfect power of utterance which solitude had left him, but in a little he was able to offer and receive explanations. Dover, the second captain, Fry, the lieutenant, and the rest of the boat-party, after partaking of Selkirk's hospitality, invited him on board; but so little eager was he to leave his solitude, that he was not prevailed upon to do so till assured that Dampier had no situation of command in the expedition—his former experience of Dampier's mode of conducting a ship having given him no great confidence in him. When he was told that Dampier was only pilot on board, he made no further objection. He was then, as we have seen, brought on board the *Duke*, along with his principal effects; and on the same day, by the recommendation of Dampier, who said he had been the best man in the *Cinque Ports*, he was engaged as a mate. 'At his first coming on board us,' says Captain Rogers, 'he had so much forgot his language, for want of use, that we could scarcely understand him, for he seemed to speak his words by halves. We offered him a dram, but he would not touch it, having drunk nothing but water since he came on the island; and it was some time before he could relish our victuals.'

For a fortnight the two vessels remained at Juan Fernandez refitting, recruiting their sick, and taking in water and provisions. In this they were greatly assisted by Selkirk, or the 'governor,' as they used to call him; who, besides giving them all the information

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necessary respecting the island, made it a daily practice to catch several goats for the use of the sick. 'He took them,' says Rogers, 'by speed of foot; for his way of living, and continual exercise of walking and running, cleared him of all gross humours, so that he ran with wonderful swiftness through the woods, and up the rocks and hills. We had a bull-dog, which we sent with several of our nimblest runners to help him in catching goats; but he distanced and tired both the dog and the men, caught the goats, and brought them to us on his back. Being forced to shift without shoes, his feet had become so hard that he ran everywhere without annoyance; and it was some time before he could wear shoes after we found him; for, not being used to any for so long, his feet swelled when he came first to use them again.' Besides giving these particulars, Captain Rogers details at some length Selkirk's mode of life during the four years and four months he had spent on the island, concluding: 'We may perceive, by this story, the truth of the maxim, that necessity is the mother of invention, since this man found means to supply his wants in a very natural manner, so as to maintain his life, though not so conveniently, yet as effectually as we are able to do with the help of our arts and society. It may likewise instruct us how much a plain and temperate way of living conduces to the health of the body and the vigour of the mind, both which we are apt to destroy by excess and plenty, especially of strong liquor, and the variety as well as the nature of our meat and drink; for this man, when he came back to our ordinary method of diet and life, though he was sober enough, lost much of his strength and agility. But these reflections are more proper for a philosopher and divine than a mariner.'

In the middle of February 1709, the *Duke* and *Duchess* set sail from the island, to cruise along the western coast of America in quest of prizes, in which they were very successful, taking two prizes in a very short time. The second of these was fitted out as a privateer to sail in company with the *Duke* and *Duchess*; and Selkirk was appointed to command her. During the remainder of the expedition, he acted in a prominent capacity under Rogers in the various enterprises, both on sea and on shore, in which the little fleet engaged. The occupation was certainly one by no means calculated to give play to the more amiable qualities of human nature; but even in the sacking of coast towns, and expeditions of plunder into the interior, which for months formed his chief employment, our hero seems to have mingled humanity in as high a proportion as possible with the execution of his duty. The expedition of Rogers was as remarkable for steadiness, resolution, and success, as that of Dampier's had been for quarrelling and indecision; and it excites a curious feeling of surprise when we learn that the Church of England service was regularly read on the quarter-decks of these piratical vessels, and all hands piped to prayers before every action. Selkirk proved himself, by his steadiness, decent manners, and religious turn

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of mind, a most appropriate member of the corps commanded by Rogers, and was accordingly much valued by his superiors. At the beginning of the ensuing year, the vessels began their voyage across the Pacific, with the design of returning by the East Indies, and in this part of the enterprise Selkirk acted as sailing-master. They did not, however, reach England till October 1711, when Selkirk had been absent from his country for eight years. Of the enormous sum of £170,000 which Rogers had realised by plundering the enemy, Selkirk seems to have shared to the amount of about eight hundred pounds.

His singular history was soon made known to the public; and immediately after his arrival in London, he became an object of curiosity not only to the people at large, but to those elevated by rank and learning. Sir Richard Steele, some time after, devoted to him an article in the paper entitled *The Englishman*, in which he tells the reader that, as Selkirk is a man of good sense, it is a matter of great curiosity to hear him give an account of the different revolutions of his mind during the term of his solitude. 'When I first saw him,' continues this writer, 'I thought if I had not been let into his character and story, I could have discovered that he had been much separated from company, *from his aspect and gesture*; there was a strong but cheerful seriousness in his look, and a certain disregard of the ordinary things about him, as if he had been sunk in thought. When the ship which brought him off the island came in, he received them with the greatest indifference with relation to the prospect of going off with them, but with great satisfaction in an opportunity to refresh and help them. The man frequently bewailed his return to the world, which could not, he said, with all its enjoyments, restore him to the tranquillity of his solitude. "I am now worth eight hundred pounds," he said, "but shall never be so happy as when I was not worth a farthing." Though I had frequently conversed with him, after a few months' absence he met me in the street, and though he spoke to me, I could not recollect that I had seen him: *familiar converse in this town had taken off the loneliness of his aspect, and quite altered the air of his face.*' What makes this latter circumstance the more remarkable is, the fact of nearly three years having elapsed between his restoration to society and the time when Sir Richard Steele first saw him.

Besides Sir Richard Steele's paper, various short accounts of Selkirk's adventures appeared within a year or two after his return to England. Defoe's romance of *Robinson Crusoe* was not published till the year 1719, when the original facts on which it was founded must have been nearly forgotten. There is no record of any interview having taken place between Selkirk and Defoe, so that it cannot be decided whether Defoe learned our hero's story from his own mouth, or from such narratives as those published by Steele and others.

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RETURN TO LARGO—RESIDENCE THERE—ELOPEMENT FROM IT— HIS SUBSEQUENT HISTORY.

It was a fine Sunday morning in the spring of 1712 ; the kirk bells of Largo had for some time ceased ringing, and the parishioners were assembled in church, when a handsomely dressed stranger knocked at the door of old John Selkirk's dwelling. No one was within, and the stranger bent his steps towards the parish church. He entered, and sat down in a pew near the door. His late entrance, the fact of his being a stranger, and his fine gold-laced clothes, attracted attention to him, and divided the interest of the congregation with the clergyman's sermon. The service proceeded. Not far from the place where the stranger had stationed himself was the pew where old John Selkirk, his wife, and others of the family were sitting, and towards this pew the stranger continued to direct his eyes. The occupants of the pew returned the glance as discreetly as they could ; old Mrs Selkirk especially several times eyed the stranger with curiosity over her Bible. At length the glances became a fixed gaze ; the old woman's face grew pale ; and crying : ' It's Sandie !—it's Sandie ! ' she tottered up to the stranger, and flung herself into his arms. The clergyman stopped, the congregation rose in a bustle of excitement, and quiet was not restored until the whole Selkirk family left the church in a body, to give full scope at home to their mutual congratulations and inquiries.

' For a few days,' says his biographer, Mr Howell, who ascertained the particulars by industrious inquiry, ' Selkirk was happy in the company of his parents and friends ; but, from long habit, he soon felt averse to mixing in society, and was most happy when alone. For days his relations never saw his face from the dawn until late in the evening, when he returned to bed. It was his custom to go out in the morning, carrying with him provisions for the day ; then would he wander and meditate alone through the secluded and solitary valley of Keil's Den. The romantic beauties of the place, and, above all, the stillness that reigned there, reminded him of his beloved island, which he never thought of but with regret for having left it. When evening forced him to return to the haunts of men, he appeared to do so with reluctance ; for he immediately retired to his room up-stairs, in his brother's house, where he resided. Here he was accustomed to amuse himself with two cats that belonged to his brother, which he taught, in imitation of a part of his occupations on his solitary island, to dance and perform many little feats. ' They were extremely fond of him, and used to watch his return. He often said to his friends, no doubt thinking of himself in his youth, that " were children as docile and obedient, parents would all be happy in them. " But poor Selkirk himself was now far from being happy, for his relations often found him in tears. Attached to his father's

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house was a piece of ground, occupied as a garden, which rose in a considerable acclivity backwards : here, on the top of the eminence, soon after his arrival in Largo, he constructed a sort of cave, commanding an extensive and delightful view of the Forth and its shores. In fits of musing meditation, he was wont to sit here in bad weather, and even at other times, and to bewail his ever having left his island. This recluse and unnatural propensity, as it appeared to them, was cause of great grief to his parents, who often remonstrated with him, and endeavoured to raise his spirits. But their efforts were made in vain ; and he sometimes broke out before them in a passion of grief, and exclaimed : “ O my beloved island ! I wish I had never left thee ! I never before was the man I was on thee ; I have not been such since I left thee, and I fear never can be again ! ” Having plenty of money, he purchased a boat for himself, and often, when the weather would permit, he made little excursions, but always alone ; and day after day he spent in fishing in the beautiful Bay of Largo, or at Kingscraig Point, where he would loiter till evening among the romantic cliffs catching lobsters—his favourite amusement, as they reminded him of the crawfish of Juan Fernandez. The rock to which he moored his boat is still shewn.’

Selkirk at length resolved to abandon this mode of life ; and the execution of his design was probably hastened by an attachment he had formed to a young girl named Sophia Bruce, whom he often met, tending her mother’s cow, in his wanderings through Keil’s Den. ‘ He never,’ says Mr Howell, ‘ mentioned the attachment to his friends ; for he felt ashamed, after his discourses to them, and the profession he had made of dislike to human society, to acknowledge that he was on the point of marrying. But to marry he was determined, though as firmly resolved not to remain at home to be the subject of their jests. He soon persuaded the object of his choice to elope with him, and bid adieu to the romantic glen. Without the knowledge of their parents, they both set out for London. He left his chest and all his clothes behind ; nor did he ever claim them again ; and his friends knew nothing and heard nothing of him for many years.’ At the time of this sudden departure from Largo, Selkirk was nearly forty years of age.

In London, Selkirk seems to have lived some time. Nothing, however, is known of his movements till 1717, in which year we find him executing a will and power of attorney, by the hands of a notary in Wapping, in favour of Sophia Bruce, the object of his affection ; being then on the point of again going to sea. The will, which is dated the 13th of January 1717, runs as follows :

‘ In the name of God, Amen, I, Alexander Selkirk of Largo, in the shire of Fife, in North Britain, mariner, being now bound out on a voyage to sea, but calling to mind the perils and dangers of the seas, and other uncertainties of this transitory life, do, for avoiding controversies and disputes which may happen to arise after my

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decease, make, publish, and declare this my last will and testament.' After one or two unimportant clauses, he continues : ' I give and bequeath unto my loving and well-beloved friend, Sophia Bruce, of the Pall-Mall, London, spinster, all and singular my lands, tenements, outhouses, gardens, yards, orchards, situate, lying, and being in Largo aforesaid, or in any other place or places whatsoever, during her natural life, and no longer ; and at and after her decease, I hereby give, devise, and bequeath the same unto my loving nephew, Alexander Selkirk, son of David Selkirk of Largo aforesaid, tanner, &c., and to his heirs or assignees. Item, my will and mind is, and I hereby declare it so to be, that my honoured father, John Selkirk, should have and enjoy the easternmost house on the Craggy Wall in Largo aforesaid, for and during his natural life, and have and receive the rents, issues, and profits thereof to his own proper use ; and that after his decease it should fall into the hands of the said Sophia Bruce, and so into the hands of my said loving nephew, Alexander Selkirk, in case he outlive my said loving friend, Sophia Bruce ; and as for and concerning all and singular the rest, residue, and remainder of my salary, wages, goods, wares, profits, merchandises, sum and sums of money, gold, silver, wearing apparel, as well linen and woollen, and all other my effects whatsoever, as well debt outstanding either by bond, bill, book, account, or otherwise, as any other thing whatsoever which shall be due, owing, payable, and belonging or in anywise of right appertaining unto me at the time of my decease, and not herein otherwise disposed of, I hereby give, devise, and bequeath the same unto my said loving friend, Sophia Bruce, and to her heirs and assignees for ever ; and I do hereby nominate, make, elect, and appoint my said trusty and loving friend, Sophia Bruce, full and sole executrix of this my last will and testament.'

The only other known particulars respecting Selkirk's life came to light in the year 1724, when a gaily dressed lady, named Frances Candis, presented herself at Largo as the widow of Alexander Selkirk, and claimed the property which had been left him by his father, including the house of Craggy Wall, mentioned in the foregoing will. She produced documents which proved her marriage with Selkirk ; a will, also dated the 12th of December 1720, entitling her to the property ; and lastly, an attestation of the death of her husband, *Lieutenant* Alexander Selkirk, on board his Majesty's ship *Weymouth* in the year 1723. From the second of these documents, it is inferred that Sophia Bruce had died some time between 1717, when the first will was executed in her favour, and 1720, when the second will was drawn up in favour of Frances Candis. Having had her claims adjusted, Selkirk's widow took her departure from Largo after a few days. So far as can be ascertained, Selkirk left no children either by her or by Sophia Bruce.

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RELICS OF SELKIRK—PRESENT CONDITION OF HIS ISLAND.

The house in which Selkirk lived during his last residence at Largo has recently been pulled down and rebuilt; it is still possessed and occupied by descendants of his brother John. His chest and his cocoa-nut shell cup are now in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries, Edinburgh. His flip-can exists in the possession of another relation; and his gun is the property of S. R. Lumsdaine, Esq., of Lathallan, near Largo. 'The flip-can,' says Mr Howell, 'holds about a Scottish pint [two quarts], and is made of brown stoneware, glazed. On it is the following inscription and posy—sailors being in all ages notoriously addicted to inscribing rhymes on such articles :

"Alexander Selkirk, this is my one.

When you take me on board of ship,
Pray fill me full with punch or flip."

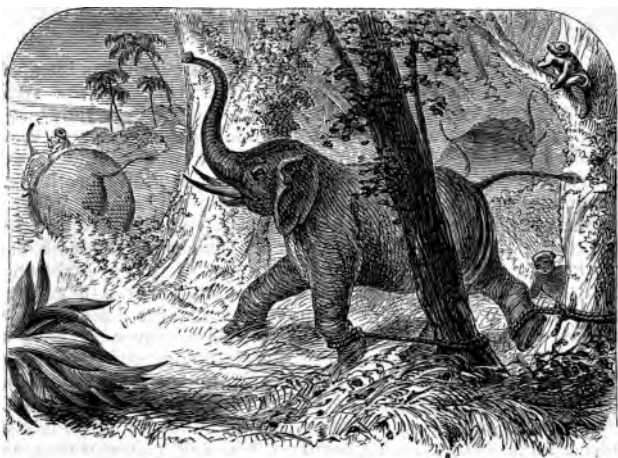
The handle of the jug is gone; its mouth is broken in two places; and a crack in the stoneware is patched with pitch, probably put on by Selkirk's own hands.' The representatives of the family retain the original spelling, *Selcraig*, which is a corruption of selch-craig, that is, seal-rock, so called from seals basking on it.

The island of Juan Fernandez, which may also be considered as a relic of Alexander Selkirk, has passed through the hands of a succession of owners since he quitted it. For upwards of thirty years after his departure it remained in the condition in which he had left it—an uninhabited island, where ships, sailing along the western coast of South America, occasionally put in for water and fresh victuals. Once or twice, indeed, the chances of shipwreck gave it one or two inhabitants, who did not remain long. In 1750, the Spaniards again formed a settlement on it, and built a fort. Both were destroyed by an earthquake in the following year; but another town was built at a greater distance from the shore. It continued to be inhabited for about twenty years, but was then abandoned, as the former Spanish settlement in the island had been. Early in the present century, the Chilian government began to use Juan Fernandez as a penal settlement, transporting their state criminals to it; but in consequence of the expense, it was soon given up; and when Lord Cochrane visited the island in 1823, there were but four men stationed on it, apparently in charge of some cattle. The following description is given of the island by a lady who accompanied Lord Cochrane and a party on shore: 'The island is the most picturesque I ever saw, being composed of high perpendicular rocks, wooded nearly to the top, with beautiful valleys, exceedingly fertile, and watered by copious streams, which occasionally form small marshes. The little valley where the town is, or rather was, is exceedingly beautiful. It is full of fruit-trees and flowers, and sweet herbs, now grown wild; near the shore, it is

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covered with radish and sea-side oats. A small fort was situated on the sea-shore, of which there is nothing now visible but the ditches and part of one wall. Another, of considerable size for the place, is on a high and commanding spot. It contained barracks for soldiers, which, as well as the greater part of the fort, are ruined; but the flag-staff, front wall, and a turret are standing; and at the foot of the flag-staff lies a very handsome brass gun, cast in Spain, 1614 A.D. A few houses and cottages are still in a tolerable condition, though most of the doors, windows, and roofs have been taken away, or used as fuel by whalers and other ships touching here. In the valleys we found numbers of European shrubs and herbs—"where once the garden smiled." And in the half-ruined hedges, which denote the boundaries of former fields, we found apple, pear, and quince trees, with cherries almost ripe. The ascent is steep and rapid from the beach, even in the valleys, and the long grass was dry and slippery, so that it rendered the walk rather fatiguing; and we were glad to sit down under a large quince-tree on a carpet of balm, bordered with roses, now neglected, and feast our eyes with the lovely view before us. Lord Anson has not exaggerated the beauty of the place, or the delights of the climate. We were rather early for its fruits, but even at this time we have gathered delicious figs, cherries, and pears, that a few days more of sun would have perfected. The landing-place is also the watering-place. There a little jetty is thrown out, formed of the beach pebbles, making a little harbour for boats, which lie there close to the fresh water, which comes conducted by a pipe, so that, with a hose, the casks may be filled without landing with the most delicious water. Along the beach some old guns are sunk, to serve as moorings for vessels, which are all the safer the nearer in-shore they lie, as violent gusts of wind often blow from the mountain for a few minutes. The height of the island is about three thousand feet.

With all its beauties and resources, the island seemed destined never to retain those who settled on it—whether from its isolated position at so great a distance from the continent, or from some other cause, is uncertain. Not long after Lord Cochrane's visit, however, it received an accession of inhabitants, some of them English, who settled in it under the protection of the Chilian government. It was afterwards held in lease by an American company; and according to the latest accounts it was ceded in 1868 to a society of Germans, under the guidance of an engineer of the name of Robert Wehrhan, who intended to colonise it. On taking possession they found it overrun by countless herds of goats, some thirty half-wild horses, and sixty donkeys. In 1868, Commodore Powell and the officers of H.M.S. *Topaze* erected a tablet on the island commemorative of Selkirk's solitary sojourn. It is firmly set into hard rock at a point near Selkirk's outlook, 'a beautiful spot about 1700 feet above the sea, having an extensive sea-view.'



ANECDOTES OF ELEPHANTS.

THE elephant is the largest and most powerful of all living quadrupeds, and may be regarded as a remnant of those gigantic races which were common at an earlier period of the earth's history. Specimens have been found upwards of twelve feet high from the sole of the foot to the ridge of the shoulder, above five tons in weight, and capable of carrying enormous burdens. In general figure, the animal seems clumsy and awkward, but this is fully compensated by the litheness and agility of his trunk. His legs are necessarily massive, for the support of such a huge body; but though apparently stiff, they are by no means the unwieldy members which many suppose. He can kneel and rise with facility; can use the fore-feet by way of hand in holding down branches while he strips off the foliage with his trunk; employ his feet in stamping his enemies to death; and has been known to travel even with a heavy load from fifty to seventy miles in twenty-four hours. His feet, which are internally divided into toes, are externally gathered into a round cushioned mass, protected by flattish nails, and are therefore unfitted for walking on roads or rocky ground. Less bulky in the hinder quarters, his strength accumulates in his chest and neck, the latter of which is short and well adapted for the support of the head and trunk, which are his principal organs of action and defence.

Compared with the bulk of his body, the head appears small; but not so when we take into account the weight and size of its appendages. These are pendulous ears, a couple of gigantic tusks in the

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male, and the proboscis or trunk, which in large specimens is capable of reaching to a distance of seven or eight feet. In the Indian species* the ears are rather small, but in the African they are so large, that the Boers and Hottentots make use of them as trucks when dried. The tusks, which correspond to the canine teeth of other quadrupeds, appear only in the upper jaw, fully developed in the male, and only partially so in the female. These he employs as his main weapons of defence, as well as in clearing away obstructions from his path, and in grubbing up succulent roots, of which he is particularly fond. The largest pair in the Paris Museum of Natural History is seven feet in length, and about half a foot in diameter at the base; but specimens of much larger dimensions are mentioned by early authors, whose accounts, however, have the disadvantage of being regarded as somewhat apocryphal. The eye of the elephant is small, but brilliant; and though, from the position in the head, it is incapable of backward and upward vision, yet this defect is remedied in a great degree by the acuteness of his hearing. Indeed all his senses are peculiarly keen, and concentrated, as it were, around the proboscis, for the purpose of directing more immediately the motions of that indispensable mechanism.

The trunk is of a tapering form, and composed of several thousand minute muscles, which cross and interlace each other, so as to give it the power of stretching and contracting, of turning itself in every direction, and of feeling and grasping with a delicacy and strength which is altogether astonishing. It encloses the nostrils, and has the power of inflating itself, of drawing in water, or of ejecting it with violence; it also terminates on the upper side in a sort of fleshy finger, and below in a similar protuberance, which answers to the opposing power of the thumb, and thus it can lift the minutest object. 'Endowed,' says an eloquent writer, 'with exquisite sensibility, nearly eight feet in length, and stout in proportion to the massive size of the whole animal, this organ, at the volition of the elephant, will uproot trees or gather grass, raise a piece of artillery or pick up a comfit, kill a man or brush off a fly. It conveys the food to the mouth, and pumps up the enormous draughts of water which, by its recurvature, are turned into and driven down the capacious throat, or showered over the body. Its length supplies the place of a long neck, which would have been incompatible with the support of the large head and weighty tusks of the animal.'

The skin of the elephant, like that of the horse, is extremely

*In systems of natural history, the elephant ranks with the *Pachyderms*, or thick-skinned class of animals, and forms the type of the *Proboscidean* order; that is, those which are furnished with a proboscis or prehensile trunk. There are only two species of the genus *Elephas*—namely, the Asiatic and the African; the latter being distinguished from the former by its large pendulous ears, less elevated head, and some minor peculiarities interesting only to professed naturalists. The *Mammoth*, whose remains are found so abundantly in Siberia, is another species which appears to have become extinct within a very recent period.

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sensitive; and though in domesticated specimens it appears chapped and callous, yet in a state of nature it is smooth, and sufficiently delicate to feel the attack of the tiniest insect; hence his care in syringing it with his trunk, in varnishing it with dust and saliva, and in fanning himself, as he often does, with a leafy bough. It possesses the same muscular peculiarity as the skin of the horse, and can, by its shuddering motion, remove the smallest object from its surface. The colour is generally of a dusky black, but individuals are occasionally found of a dull brown, or nearly white. Albinos, or rather cream-whites, are, however, extremely rare, and are treated with divine honours by some of the Eastern nations, as in Siam, Ava, and the Burman Empire.

NATURAL HABITS.

In its mode of life the elephant is strictly herbivorous, feeding upon rank grass, young shoots of trees, and succulent roots. His whole conformation is eminently fitted for such subsistence, and points to the tropical valley and fertile river-side as the localities where he can enjoy at all seasons herbage and water in abundance. Though created for the jungle and forest, where heat and moisture are the chief vegetative agents, yet the elephant, by his weight and size, is excluded from the swamp. He bathes in the river and lake only where the bottom is firm and secure, and rolls on the sward or in the forest glade, and not in the marsh, where he would inevitably sink beyond the means of extrication. Confined to the regions of an almost perpetual summer, he grubs up roots with his tusks, pulls down branches with his trunk to browse on their foliage, or feeds on the luxuriant herbage, enjoying greater ease and security than any other quadruped. His great size and strength place him beyond the dread of other animals; and, like all the herbivora, he is of mild disposition, having no occasion to wage war upon others for the satisfaction of his natural cravings.

In India, the head-quarters of the animal are the moist forests in the south-east of Bengal, and some parts of the Western Ghats, but more especially the former. The forests on the Tippera hills, on the south of the Silhet district, have long been the place where the principal continental supply of elephants has been obtained; and there they are found in herds of about a hundred in number. In Africa, they were, till recently, pretty numerous in Cape Colony; but the progress of civilisation has driven them inland, and they are now to be met with in droves only in the more fertile plains and along the river margins of Caffraria. During the time of the Carthaginians, the north of Africa appears to have been also numerous stocked with elephants; but this district they have long since abandoned; and even in the western regions, which furnished ivory in abundance during the early settlement of

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the Portuguese, they have become almost extinct. We know too little of the interior of that great continent, to say in what numbers they may exist in the plains drained by the Tchad, Niger, and other tropical rivers; but there, we presume, they still roam in undiminished numbers. Like most vegetable feeders, they are gregarious; and the herd is generally found to follow the oldest pair as leaders, and to go readily wherever they lead the way. In their marches through those forests, tangled as they are with underwood, sight would be of little avail, and therefore their means of communication are scent and sound. By these means food, friends, and foes appear to be detected with great certainty, and at a considerable distance.

The elephant has three distinct notes of intercommunication. The first is rather clear and shrill—a trumpet note produced wholly by the trunk, and emitted when the animal is in good-humour, and all is safe; the second is a growl or groan issuing from the mouth, and is the cry of hunger, or an intimation to the rest when one has come upon an abundant supply of food; and the third, which is loud and long, like the roaring of the lion, is the war-cry by which the animal prefaces his own hostilities, or calls his associates to his aid. The members of the herd seldom roam far from each other, and even then the tiger, notwithstanding his agility and strength, will hardly venture to attack the elephant. Should he do so, the male receives him on his tusks, tosses him into the air, and stands prepared to stamp his fatal foot upon him the instant that he touches the ground. The female elephant has no tusks upon which to receive an enemy, but she has the art to fall upon him, and crush him by her weight. In their native forests, therefore, elephants, whether acting singly or in concert, are invincible to all enemies save man. The latter, even in his rudest state, has only to light a fire, and the huge brute flies in the utmost consternation; or he digs a pit and covers it with turf, and the animal falls into it, helpless, and at his mercy; or it may be that he tips his arrow with the vegetable poisons which experience has enabled him to practise, and the fatal substance benumbs and curdles the blood of his victim.

A herd of these gigantic animals browsing in their native forests must be an imposing spectacle: here a group stripping the well-foliaged branches, there another twisting the long grass into bundles; here a set listlessly flapping their ears under the shade, there another toying with each other, 'making unwieldy merriment.' The enjoyment of this primitive scene is, however, somewhat disturbed by the consideration of the ravage and destruction which the herd commits. It is not so much the amount of food which they consume, as the immense quantity they destroy with their feet; hence the dread of the settler on the confines of the forests they frequent—the labour of a season being often destroyed in a single night. Having satisfied

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their hunger, the herd either recline under the shade, or more frequently stand dozing with their sides leaning against the trunk of some stately tree. Thirst, however, soon drives them from their indolent repose ; and nothing does the elephant enjoy more than to drink and bathe himself in the running stream.

‘Trampling his path through wood and brake,
And canes which crackling fall before his way,
And tassel-grass, whose silvery feathers play,
O’ertopping the young trees,
On comes the elephant, to slake
His thirst at noon in yon pellucid springs.
Lo ! from his trunk upturned, aloft he flings
The grateful shower ; and now
Plucking the broad-leaved bough
Of yonder palm, with waving motion slow,
Fanning the languid air,
He waves it to and fro.’

Provided with a powerful structure, and enjoying abundance of ease and food, the elephant in general attains to a very old age. The ancients ascribed to him a life of three or four hundred years ; but, without laying much stress on their opinion, we have undoubted evidence of even domesticated specimens reaching the great age of one hundred and thirty years. The peculiar provision made for the renewal of his teeth—which are unique in the animal creation—shews that nature intended him for a lengthened existence ; for, while in a limited number of years the teeth of other animals wear down and fall out, the elephant’s are in a continual state of progression, so that they are as powerful at the age of eighty as they were at eighteen. There is a limit, however, to the duration of all organised being ; and in course of years the joints of the elephant become stiff, his skin hard and chapped, his appetite fails, and being unable to follow the herd, he gradually sinks under the weight of years and infirmity. The young elephant, which at its birth is little larger than an ordinary calf, is of slow growth, arriving at maturity in not less than eight or ten years. It is very playful and harmless ; and though suckled for a considerable time, is said to receive but a very scanty share of maternal affection. On this head, however, we have few opportunities of judging ; we know little of the animal in a truly natural state, and it breeds too seldom in captivity to be observed with accuracy.

ELEPHANT-HUNTING.

Man, standing in relation of superior to the brute creation, is necessitated to use this power for various purposes. He hunts them for their flesh, for their skins, or for some other substance of

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utility ; he destroys them because they are obnoxious to his cultivated fields, or dangerous to his personal safety ; he subjugates and trains them for the assistance they can yield him ; or it may be that he chases them for mere amusement. Thus it is with the elephant. The Kaffir hunts him for his flesh, which to him is a dainty, and for his ivory tusks, which he barter with the European ; the settler digs the pit and levels the rifle, to protect his crops and enclosures ; the Hindu subjugates the powerful brute for the purposes of burden ; and the English officer in India talks of ' bagging ' elephants for sport. Whatever be the ultimate object, the pursuit of such a huge and sagacious animal must be attended with no small danger ; hence the exciting descriptions with which books of Eastern travel abound. Of these, with which we could fill volumes, we shall select one or two striking examples.

The ordinary modes of capture resorted to by rude nations are poisoned arrows, pitfalls, and cutting the hamstrings of the animal. The two former are accomplished with little risk, but the latter requires great address and ingenuity. It is thus described by Bruce, as practised by the Africans, to whom elephant's flesh is a necessary as well as a luxury : ' Two men, absolutely naked, without any rag or covering at all about them, get on horseback ; this precaution is for fear of being laid hold of by the trees or bushes, in making their escape from a very watchful enemy. One of these riders sits upon the back of the horse, sometimes with a saddle, and sometimes without one, with only a switch or short stick in one hand, carefully managing the bridle with the other ; behind him sits his companion, who has no other arms but a broadsword, such as is used by the Slavonians, and which is brought from Trieste. His left hand is employed in grasping the sword by the handle ; about fourteen inches of the blade being covered with whip-cord. This part he takes in his right hand, without any danger of being hurt by it ; and, though the edges of the lower part of the sword are as sharp as a razor, he carries it without a scabbard.

' As soon as the elephant is found feeding, the horseman rides before him, as near his face as possible ; or, if he flies, crosses him in all directions, crying out : " I am such a man and such a man ; this is my horse, that has such a name ; I killed your father in such a place, and your grandfather in such another place, and I am now come to kill you ; you are but an ass in comparison of them." This nonsense he verily believes the elephant understands, who, chafed and angry at hearing the noise immediately before him, seeks to seize him with his trunk or proboscis ; and, intent upon this, follows the horse everywhere, turning and turning round with him, neglectful of making his escape by running straight forward, in which consists his only safety. After having made him turn once or twice in pursuit of the horse, the horseman rides close up alongside of him, and drops his companion just behind on the offside ; and while he engages the

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elephant's attention upon the horse, the footman behind gives him a drawn stroke just above the heel, or what in man is called the tendon of Achilles. This is the critical moment; the horseman immediately wheels round, takes his companion up behind him, and rides off at full speed after the rest of the herd, if they have started more than one; and sometimes an expert agageer will kill three out of one herd. If the sword is good, and the man not afraid, the tendon is commonly entirely separated; and if it is not cut through, it is generally so far divided that the animal, with the stress he puts upon it, breaks the remaining part asunder. In either case he remains incapable of advancing a step till the horseman's return; or his companions coming up, pierce him through with javelins and lances; he then falls to the ground, and expires with loss of blood.

In South Africa, the musket and rifle take the place of the knife, and as in this case the hunter requires to be on his feet, the danger of the chase is greatly increased. The life of the Hottentot elephant-hunter is indeed one of imminent peril, and few practise it for many years without being maimed or crushed to death by the infuriated animals. They are a brave, fearless set of men, encountering every species of risk, and enduring fatigue with a courage that is truly wonderful. Accompanied by a few such spirits, the European resident generally sets out on a hunting expedition—indeed it would be madness in him to enter the bush without such an escort. We have a spirited account of such an adventure in the following personal narrative of Lieutenant Moodie: 'In the year 1821, I had joined the recently formed semi-military settlement of Fredericksburg, on the picturesque banks of the Gualana, beyond the Great Fish River. At this place our party (consisting chiefly of the disbanded officers and soldiers of the Royal African Corps) had already shot many elephants, with which the country at that time abounded. The day previous to my adventure, I had witnessed an elephant-hunt for the first time. On this occasion a large female was killed, after some hundred shots had been fired at her. The balls seemed at first to produce little effect, but at length she received several shots in the trunk and eyes, which entirely disabled her from making resistance or escaping, and she fell an easy prey to her assailants.

'On the following day, one of our servants came to inform us that a large troop of elephants was in the neighbourhood of the settlement, and that several of our people were already on their way to attack them. I instantly set off to join the hunters, but, from losing my way in the jungle through which I had to proceed, I could not overtake them until after they had driven the elephants from their first station. On getting out of the jungle, I was proceeding through an open meadow on the banks of the Gualana, to the spot where I heard the firing, when I was suddenly warned of approaching danger by loud cries of "*Passop!*—Look out!" coupled with my name in Dutch and English; and at the same moment heard the

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crackling of broken branches, produced by the elephants bursting through the wood, and the tremendous screams of their wrathful voices resounding among the precipitous banks. Immediately a large female, accompanied by three others of a smaller size, issued from the edge of the jungle which skirted the river margin. As they were not more than two hundred yards off, and were proceeding directly towards me, I had not much time to decide on my motions. Being alone, and in the middle of a little open plain, I saw that I must inevitably be caught, should I fire in this position and my shot not take effect. I therefore retreated hastily out of their direct path, thinking they would not observe me, until I should find a better opportunity to attack them. But in this I was mistaken, for on looking back, I perceived, to my dismay, that they had left their former course, and were rapidly pursuing and gaining ground on me. Under these circumstances, I determined to reserve my fire as a last resource; and turning off at right angles in the opposite direction, I made for the banks of the small river, with a view to take refuge among the rocks on the other side, where I should have been safe. But before I got within fifty paces of the river, the elephants were within twenty paces of me—the large female in the middle, and the other three on either side of her, apparently with the intention of making sure of me; all of them screaming so tremendously, that I was almost stunned with the noise. I immediately turned round, cocked my gun, and aimed at the head of the largest—the female. But the gun, unfortunately, from the powder being damp, hung fire till I was in the act of taking it from my shoulder, when it went off, and the ball merely grazed the side of her head. Halting only for an instant, the animal again rushed furiously forward. I fell—I cannot say whether struck down by her or not. She then caught me with her trunk by the middle, threw me beneath her fore-feet, and knocked me about between them for a little space. I was scarcely in a condition to compute the number of minutes very accurately. Once she pressed her foot on my chest with such force, that I actually felt the bones, as it were, bending under the weight; and once she trod on the middle of my arm, which fortunately lay flat on the ground at the time. During this rough handling, however, I never entirely lost my recollection, else I have little doubt she would have settled my accounts with this world. But owing to the roundness of her foot, I generally managed, by twisting my body and limbs, to escape her direct tread. While I was still undergoing this buffeting, Lieutenant Chisholm, of the R.A. corps, and Diederik, a Hottentot, had come up, and fired several shots at her, one of which hit her in the shoulder; and at the same time her companions, or young ones, retiring, and screaming to her from the edge of the forest, she reluctantly left me, giving me a cuff or two with her hind-feet in passing. I got up, picked up my gun, and staggered away as fast as my aching bones would allow;

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but observing that she turned round, and looked back towards me before entering the bush, I lay down in the long grass, by which means I escaped her observation.

‘On reaching the top of the high bank of the river, I met my brother, who had not been at this day’s hunt, but had run out on being told by one of the men that he had seen me killed. He was not a little surprised at meeting me alone and in a whole skin, though plastered with mud from head to foot. While he, Mr Knight of the Cape Regiment, and I, were yet talking of my adventure, an unlucky soldier of the R.A. corps, of the name of M’Clane, attracted the attention of a large male elephant, which had been driven towards the village. The ferocious animal gave chase, and caught him immediately under the height where we were standing, carried him some distance in his trunk, then threw him down, and bringing his four feet together, trod and stamped upon him for a considerable time, till he was quite dead. Leaving the corpse for a little, he again returned, as if to make quite sure of his destruction, and kneeling down, crushed and kneaded the body with his fore-legs. Then seizing it again with his trunk, he carried it to the edge of the jungle, and threw it among the bushes. While this tragedy was going on, my brother and I scrambled down the bank as far as we could, and fired at the furious animal, but we were at too great a distance to be of any service to the unfortunate man, who was crushed almost to a jelly.

‘Shortly after this catastrophe, a shot from one of the people broke this male elephant’s left fore-leg, which completely disabled him from running. On this occasion we witnessed a touching instance of affection and sagacity in the elephant, which I cannot forbear to relate, as it so well illustrates the character of this noble animal. Seeing the danger and distress of her mate, the female before mentioned (my personal antagonist), regardless of her own danger, quitted her shelter in the bush, rushed out to his assistance, walked round and round him, chasing away the assailants, and still returning to his side and caressing him; and when he attempted to walk, she placed her flank under his wounded side and supported him. This scene continued nearly half an hour, until the female received a severe wound from Mr C. Mackenzie of the R.A. corps, which drove her again to the bush, where she speedily sank exhausted from the loss of blood; and the male soon after received a mortal wound also from the same officer.

‘Thus ended our elephant-hunt; and I need hardly say that what we witnessed on this occasion of the intrepidity and ferocity of these powerful animals, rendered us more cautious in our dealings with them for the future.’

We might extend our narrative of such adventures almost indefinitely, and the recital would present but little variation. *The same mode of life, the same difficulty in getting near the watchful*

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animals, the same accounts of resentment when they are wounded or infuriated, and the same tale of butchery when neither necessity nor safety requires the sacrifice. In the jungles of Hindustan and Ceylon, similar hunting-matches are sometimes got up by British officers, but the entangled state of the bush, and the danger of encountering the tiger or lion, happily render such 'sport' of comparatively rare occurrence. The African values the elephant only for his tusks and some tidbits of his carcass; the Indian regards him as a powerful auxiliary in labour and war, or as an indispensable adjunct of royal equipage. The former presents himself as a mere destroyer; the latter becomes a guardian and preceptor, and finds himself rewarded in proportion to the pains and kindness he bestows upon his gigantic captive.

CAPTURE OF THE ELEPHANT IN INDIA.

The object of the hunter in India being to obtain a large and powerful assistant in toil, he accordingly practises more merciful methods of capture. It is obvious, however, that to secure an animal so sagacious and strong, not only great ingenuity, but very forcible means, must be called into operation. The means most commonly employed are the noose, the pitfall, decoy females, and the kraal or keddah. Pliny, speaking of the capture of elephants in his time, says: 'The Indian hunter mounts an individual already tamed; and meeting with a wild one separated from the herd, he pursues it and strikes it until it becomes so exhausted, that he can leap from the one to the other, and thus reduce the animal to obedience.' The animals in Pliny's time must either have been more stupid, or the hunters more expert than they are now, for no such procedure would at present be found effectual. The capture and subjugation of an elephant is a work requiring great skill, caution, and patience; and we presume the Roman naturalist took his ideas from the trained ones accompanying the armies of the Empire, rather than from the wild specimens of the Indian jungle.

The noose or slip-knot is seldom resorted to, unless with very young and small specimens. This mode is something similar to that practised by the American guacho in capturing the wild horse of the Pampas—the slip-knot or *phaum* of the Hindu being the equivalent of the *lasso*. Mounted on well-trained elephants, two or three hunters surround a wild one, and entangle him with their phaums: he strains and struggles, but the tame ones resist his efforts, or he is strapped to a tree, till hunger and exhaustion reduce him to submission. He is then released, and driven off between the tame ones; and in a few months yields his master all but implicit obedience. The pitfall is a less skilful and more dangerous method, in so far as the safety of the animal is concerned. A pit, carefully

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concealed with green boughs and turf, is dug in a path, over which the hunter endeavours to force the animal by blazing the herbage behind him. The alarmed elephant blindly hurries forward, and is precipitated into the excavation, where he is allowed to remain till he exhausts his rage, and begins to feel the cravings of hunger. Grass, rice, cane-shoots, and other delicacies are supplied him by degrees; and being well secured with ropes, he is at last encouraged to raise himself from his confinement. This is done by throwing into the pit fagots and bundles of forage, which he places under his feet, till he is brought near to the surface, when forth he steps fettered, but sufficiently subdued to be mounted by a skilful driver.

Decoy females are often used, and in some of the countries bordering Hindustan, are said to be the only means employed in the capture of the large solitary males. Having watched a strayed one till a favourable opportunity occurs, the hunters urge the decoys, or *koomkees*, forward; and so thoroughly conscious are these of their duty, that they approach their victim with all possible wiles and blandishments. The hunters having concealed themselves in the bush, the females begin to browse, gradually nearing the male, yet all the while feigning the utmost indifference. By and by he begins to approach them, and offer his attentions, caressing them with his trunk, and being caressed in return. During the intoxication of his pleasure, the hunters creep cautiously forward, and entangle his legs with thongs; an operation in which they are sometimes assisted by the wily *koomkees*. Having attached these thongs to well-secured ropes, the decoys are ordered aside, and the victim feeling his position, struggles, roars, and becomes infuriated. Occasionally, in the paroxysms of his rage, he bursts asunder his fetters, and escapes to the forest; but in general he is too well secured, and merely exhausts himself by his fruitless efforts.

In India, proper, and in Ceylon, the capture of elephants is generally conducted on a more extensive scale by the *kraal* or *keddah*. This is a large enclosure formed of one, two, or three rows of strong posts, into which the animals are driven from the surrounding country, and then secured by means of skilful hunters, and tame elephants trained for the purpose. Books of Eastern travel abound with descriptions of *keddah* hunts; but instead of gleanings from these, we shall transcribe the narrative of a friend, who several years ago participated in the sport in the district of Kandy. After describing the preliminaries, which seem to have thrown the whole district into a ferment, he thus proceeds with his spirited description: 'With respect to the *kraal*, it was nothing more than an enclosure about two hundred yards long, and nearly square in form, made with very strong posts, or rather small trees, stuck into the ground, and bound together. The inside was a thick jungle, with large trees in it, and the outside the same, excepting where it was cleared sufficiently to admit of the fence and a path round it. The

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entrance was about ten feet wide, with deep holes ready for the stakes to be driven in the moment the poor brutes were entrapped. It was covered over by a few green boughs, and is generally so contrived as to be in a track the elephants are in the habit of following. Kraals are only constructed in parts of the country frequented by elephants, and when it is known that there is a herd in the neighbourhood. As soon as the enclosure is finished, the elephants are surrounded by a crowd of people, who form a circle from the entrance of the kraal, and enclose them within it. This circle of course is very large, and varies according to circumstances; in this instance, when we arrived, the animals were enclosed in a circle of about two miles. Whenever they attempt to break through, they are driven back by the people, who shout and yell with all their might, beat the tom-toms, discharge guns, and at night fires are lighted at every ten or twelve yards' distance round the circle, and this always frightens the elephants. The natives are most anxious to have them destroyed, as they do much mischief, particularly to their paddy-fields; so that at all the kraals the natives in hundreds volunteer their services, which of course are gladly accepted. Government gives a premium of £3 for every elephant captured.

A very large tree at one end of the enclosure was selected for the spectators, on which, about one-third of the height up, was laid a platform capable of holding thirty or forty people, and formed of small branches fastened together by what is called jungle rope, which is nothing more than the creepers which are twisted round every tree and bush. A very large party of us sat down to an excellent breakfast in the tents; and the yelling appearing to come nearer and nearer, we were advised to make the best of our way to the tree, which we ascended by a steep ladder, and found it very comfortable, as we were completely shaded from the sun by an awning of cocoa-nut leaves. Having gained this commanding point, our patience was tried for several hours; for though the elephants were often so near the entrance that we could see the bushes move, and sometimes their ears flapping, yet they always broke away again, till at last, about three o'clock, eight elephants were driven into the kraal. Then the noise of the people became deafening, and their shouts and yells of triumph drove the poor creatures on; and we had a fine view of them as they came rushing towards us, crushing the jungle in every direction. The posts were immediately put down at the entrance, and the natives stationed themselves all round the fence; and whenever the animals came near it, they were driven back by their howling and waving white sticks at them. It is said that the elephant particularly dislikes white, which is the reason the wands are flourished; but perhaps it is that white is more conspicuous than anything else among the dark green. They were driven back several times, till they had half-exhausted themselves, and were then comparatively quiet in the thickest cover they could find, and all we

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saw was an occasional shower of earth that they tossed over their bodies with their trunks.

'Having thus so far succeeded, the next thing was to secure them; and for this purpose the tame elephants were introduced into the kraal. Six very large ones were brought in, just under our tree, and began breaking down the jungle and clearing a space round the large trees, to which it was intended to tie the wild ones. It was really wonderful to see them twining their trunks round some of the smaller trees, and with two or three good shakes laying them flat. They sometimes pushed their head against a tree, so as to bring the whole force of their body upon it, and then down it came; as for the brushwood, part of which was upwards of six feet high, they really mowed it down with their trunks. In about an hour's time the whole was, comparatively speaking, clear, and the poor herd had no longer any hiding-place, but stood all huddled close together in a little thicket about the middle of the kraal. There was one very little thing among them, not much bigger than a large pig, and they seemed to take the greatest care of him, keeping him in the centre of them.

'Each tame elephant had two men on his back, one to guide him, and the other to noose the wild ones, who did not seem to be much afraid of them, as they allowed them to come very near, and then walked rather slowly away. One of the tame ones then followed in the most stealthy and treacherous manner possible; and when he came close enough to the wild one, he began coaxing and tickling him with his trunk, whilst the man with the noose, which is fastened round the tame one's neck, slipped off his back with it, and watched his opportunity to throw it over the hind leg of the other. He soon did this, as apparently the tame one gave the wild elephant a poke with his tusk, which made him lift his leg as if to move on; and in a moment he was a prisoner. While the man was thus employed, it was curious to see the care which the tame elephant took of him, interposing his huge head in such a manner that the wild one could not touch him; and if he should fail of securing the wild elephant, which sometimes happens, the tame one puts out his leg for the man to mount on his back, and sets off in pursuit again, which is sure to be successful in the end.

'When the poor animal was noosed, he set up a dreadful yell, and tried to escape; but that was impossible, for the other tame elephants came up and headed him, whichever way he attempted to go; whilst the one to which he was fastened bent his body the way he wished to take him, and pulled him along with all his strength to the tree to which he was to be tied. When he was dragged close to it, the tame one walked round it two or three times with the rope, till he was quite secure. Another came to his other side, and thus he was wedged so closely between them, that he could not make much resistance; and if he did, he was immediately thrust at with the

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tusks of both of them. In this way his legs were all firmly tied to two trees by great cable ropes.

'When the tame ones left him to go in search of the others, he began struggling most furiously, and moaned and bellowed in a very melancholy manner, frequently throwing himself on the ground, and digging his teeth into the earth, while the tears were rolling down his face. Although I came on purpose to see all this, and should have been much disappointed if I had not, still I could not help feeling very sorry to see the noble animal suffering so acutely. My consolation was, that some day he would have the pleasure of doing the same to others; for it really seemed a pleasure to the tame ones. His cries brought back the rest of the herd, who looked at him through the bushes, but did not attempt a rescue, which they often do, but took to their heels whenever they saw the tame ones turn in their direction.

'In this manner they were all secured, excepting the little one, as he could not do much harm, and always kept close to his mother, who was very quiet, and was therefore only tied by three legs. A young elephant is, I think, the drollest-looking creature possible. This one was supposed to be about three months old, and was not above three feet high; but it made more noise than all the rest, and trumpeted and charged in great style.'

DOMESTICATION AND EMPLOYMENT.

Strictly speaking, the elephant cannot be classed with domesticated animals. When tamed and trained, he is no doubt a useful assistant, and is capable of performing duties which no other of the brute creation could approach; still he is not domesticated in the sense in which we apply the term to the horse, the ox, and the dog. These live with us, breed with us, die with us; their progeny partaking of the qualities of the parents, and being subject in course of time to innumerable modifications, as man may desire. Not so with the elephant. The huge, docile brute, adorned with the trappings of Eastern pomp, was but a few months ago the inhabitant of the jungle—the same as his progenitors have been for ages. In captivity the animal breeds but sparingly, grows slowly, and is expensive to maintain; and thus man is nearer his purpose to throw the noose or erect the keddah, when his stock requires to be replenished. Subjugation has effected no change on the form of the elephant, as on that of the horse and ox, either for better or for worse; and though his natural endowments admit of ingenious training, yet is he not domesticated. He is the servant-captive rather than the associate of man.

At what time the elephant was first subjugated, and trained to take part in the court and military equipage of the East, we have no means of knowing. His form appears on the most ancient Hindu

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sculptures; he figures in their mythology; and he is spoken of with pride and veneration in their earliest records. In that fertile and luxurious region he had been trained for centuries before the names of Greece and Rome were known, and even long before the people of Western Asia had passed from the primitive or pastoral condition. By the time of Herodotus, who visited Babylon about 500 years before the Christian era, elephants were common at that city; and about a century later, Ctesias witnessed them in the same place 'overthrow palm-trees at the bidding of their drivers.' In the expedition of Cyrus against the Derlakes, the latter were assisted by the Indians with war-elephants, who put to flight the cavalry of their opponent; and from contemporary notices it would seem that about this period the Persians and others were also in the habit of using them in war. It was to Alexander the Great that the western world was first indebted for the elephant: he it was that made the sports of Persia and India familiar to the Greeks and Macedonians. The acquisition of the war-elephant gave new pomp and splendour

to his squadrons, and his example was followed by degrees by other nations. In time, the Egyptians, Carthaginians, Romans, all made use of elephants, both to assist in the march by carrying enormous loads of baggage, and to join the ranks, mounted by numbers of spearmen and archers. 'These animals,' says Potter, 'were wont to carry into the battle large towers, in which ten, fifteen, and, as some affirm, thirty soldiers were contained, who annoyed their enemies with missile weapons, themselves being secure and out of danger. Nor were the

beasts idle or useless in engagements; for besides that, with their smell, their vast and amazing bulk, and their strange and terrible noise, both horses and soldiers were struck with terror and astonishment, they acted their parts courageously, trampling under foot all opposers, or catching them in their trunks, and tossing them into the air, or delivering them to their riders. Nor was it unusual for them to engage with one another with great fury, which they always doubled after they had received wounds, tearing their adversaries in pieces with their tusks. But in a short time they were wholly laid



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aside, their service not being able to compensate the great mischiefs frequently done by them ; for though they were endued with great sagacity, and approached nearer to human reason than any other animal, whereby they became more tractable to their governors, and capable of yielding obedience to their instructions, yet, when severely wounded, and pressed upon by their enemies, they became ungovernable, and frequently turned all their rage upon their own party, put them into confusion, committed terrible slaughters, and delivered the victory to their enemies ; of which several remarkable instances are recorded in the histories both of Greece and Rome.' For the same reason, but more especially since the introduction of firearms and artillery, the war-elephant has been greatly abandoned even in the East, and is now chiefly used in carrying baggage, in doing other heavy work, and, above all, in adding to the 'pomp and circumstance' of oriental authority.

The present employment of the elephant in India, according to Von Orlich and other recent authors, is exceedingly varied—from the piling of firewood and the drawing of water, to the dragging of artillery and the carriage of royalty. In captivity he is well fed, regularly cleaned, and attended by the *mahouds* or drivers with greater care than they would one of their own species. On entering upon bondage he is never maimed, like the horse, ass, and dog ; the only loss he suffers being portions of his tusks, if these should be long and dangerous. An ordinary animal will cost about one thousand rupees (£100) ; but if large and tractable, he cannot be purchased under four or five thousand. His keep, which consists of grass, roots, rice, sugar-cane, and other vegetables, costs fully forty rupees a month, so that it is only the rich and powerful who can afford the luxury of an elephant stud. When placed under the *howdah* (a covered scat for persons of rank), his back is protected by a thickly-stuffed hair cushion, over which is spread an ornamented covering. The howdah is made to contain two persons, and this is the amount of the travelling elephant's burden. The driver sits on his neck, immediately behind the ears, and guides him with an iron prong ; and he is in general so docile, as to kneel for the parties to mount him. His great use, however, is as a beast of burden in a country where there are few or no roads ; and since an ordinary elephant will carry as much as five camels, we can readily perceive their value in marching not only with the commanders and sick, but with the tents and furniture. He is equally serviceable as a beast of draught, pulling with ease what it would take ten horses to move ; and it is for this reason that the Indian army has recently yoked him to their heavy artillery. Another power which the animal possesses, and one which is unknown to the horse or ox, is that of pushing ; and if his forehead be protected by a leathern pad, he will push forward weights which perhaps he could not draw. These and many other duties the elephant performs willingly and accurately ;

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and, if gently treated and well fed, with a regularity of disposition which seems almost mechanical. Last, but not least, for purposes of splendour he plays an important part in the immense retinues of great persons in India. When Sir Jasper Nicholls, commander-in-chief in one of the wars, arrived at the camp at Ferozepore, eighty elephants swelled his train. He had, in addition, three hundred camels and one hundred and thirty-six draught oxen; and above one thousand servants were present, merely for Sir Jasper's personal service, and to attend to the animals. When the governor-general made his entry, he brought along with him one hundred and thirty elephants and seven hundred camels!

It is in a state of bondage, therefore, and in the discharge of these multifarious duties, that we are now to consider the elephant, and to seek for those instances of docility, affection, memory, sagacity, and other dispositions, the display of which has rendered his history remarkable beyond that of any other animal—the dog and horse alone perhaps excepted.

DOCILITY AND OBEDIENCE.

In point of docility or teachableness, the elephant is inferior to none of the brute creation; and yet he is not so far superior as many naturalists would have us to believe. The dog, the horse, ass, parrot, canary bird, and even the pig, sensual and stupid as it is generally considered, can each be taught to perform many astonishing feats; and if the elephant surpass them, it is only because he is furnished with an instrument of higher capability. Apart altogether from the question of sagacity or mental endowment, which will be considered in another section, he could not be taught to uncork a bottle, unscrew a nut, fan himself with a branch, or lift his master on his back, any more than the horse could, were it not that he possesses the wonderful grasping powers of the trunk, which in this respect is all but equal to the human hand. Indeed it is argued, upon very obvious grounds, that were the horse or dog endowed with an organ of the same aptitude, either would far excel the elephant in docility and performance. Be this as it may, the feats of the latter are not the less attractive, as the following anecdotes and illustrations will shew.

According to Ælian, the elephants of Germanicus were trained to take part in the performances of the Roman theatre. There, among the assembled thousands, they appeared quite at home, lost all dread of the clashing of cymbals, and moved in cadence to the sounds of the notes of the flute. 'Upon one occasion'—we quote the account given in the Library of Entertaining Knowledge—'when a particular exhibition of the docility of these elephants was required, twelve of the most sagacious and well trained were selected, who, marching into the theatre with a regular step, at the voice of their

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keeper, moved in harmonious measure, sometimes in a circle, and sometimes divided into parties, scattering flowers over the pavement. In the intervals of the dance, they would beat time to the music, still preserving their proper order. The Romans, with their accustomed luxury, feasted the elephants, after this display, with prodigal magnificence. Splendid couches were placed in the arena, ornamented with paintings, and covered with tapestry. Before the couches, upon tables of ivory and cedar, was spread the banquet of the elephants, in vessels of gold and silver. The preparations being completed, the twelve elephants marched in, six males clad in the robes of men, and six females attired as women. They lay down in order upon their couches, or "*tricliniums* of festival recumbency," and, at a signal, extended their trunks, and ate with most praiseworthy moderation. Not one of them, says Ælian, appeared the least voracious, or manifested any disposition for an unequal share of the food, or an undue proportion of the delicacies. They were as moderate also in their drink, and received the cups which were presented to them with the greatest decorum. According to Pliny, at the spectacles given by Germanicus, it was not an uncommon thing to see elephants hurl javelins in the air, and catch them in their trunks, fight with each other as gladiators, and then execute a Pyrrhic dance. Lastly, they danced upon a rope, and their steps were so practised and certain, that four of them traversed the rope, or rather parallel ropes, bearing a litter which contained one of their companions, who feigned to be sick. This feat of dancing or walking upon a rope might perhaps be doubted, if it rested merely upon the testimony of a single author; but the practice is confirmed by many ancient writers of authority, who agree with Pliny that the elephants trained at Rome would not only walk along a rope forward, but retire backward with equal precision.

Even in our country the elephant has been taught to take part in the performances of the theatre—in other words, to appear as an actor requisite to the plot of the drama. This took place in the London Adelphi and in the Coburg a number of years ago; and however questionable might have been the taste, there is no doubt that the 'sagacious brute' was the most applauded player of the time. This animal, a female, was marched in procession, knelt down at the waving of the hand, placed the crown on the head of 'the true prince,' uncorked and drank several bottles of wine with decorum, supped with her stage companions around her, and made her obeisance to the audience. Above all, she assisted the escape of some of the *dramatis personæ* from prison, by kneeling upon her hind legs, and thus forming an inclined plane for the safe descent of her friends; and this she did, unmoved by the glare of numerous lights, the sounds of music, and shouts of the admiring spectators. Equally curious with this is the feat mentioned by Arrian, of an elephant that he saw beating a measure with cymbals.

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This was performed by having two cymbals attached to its knees, while it held a third in its proboscis, and beat with great exactness the while others danced around it, without deviating from the time indicated. Busbequius, who visited Constantinople about the middle of the sixteenth century, there witnessed an elephant not only dance with elegance and accuracy, but play at ball with great skill, tossing it with his trunk, and catching it again, as easily as a man could with his hands. Nay, if we can credit Ælian, he has seen an elephant 'write Latin characters on a board in a very orderly manner, his keeper only shewing him the figure of each letter.'

Among the most interesting elephants kept in this country, without any reference to profit, was one which was at the Duke of Devonshire's villa, at Chiswick, the gift of a lady in India. This animal was a female, remarkable for the gentleness of its disposition; and from the kindness with which it was treated, and the free range that was allowed it, probably came nearer to an elephant in a state of nature than any other which ever appeared in this country. The house erected for her shelter was of large dimensions, and well ventilated; and she had, besides, the range of a paddock of considerable extent. At the call of her keeper she came out of her house, and immediately took up a broom, ready to perform his bidding in sweeping the grass or paths. She would follow him with a pail or watering-pot round the enclosure. Her reward was a carrot and some water; but previously to satisfying her thirst, she would exhibit her ingenuity by emptying the contents of a soda-water bottle, which was tightly corked. This she did by pressing the bottle against the ground with her foot, so as to hold it securely at an angle of about forty-five degrees, and gradually twisting out the cork with her trunk, although it was very little above the edge of the neck; then, without altering the position, she turned her trunk round the bottle, so that she might reverse it, and thus empty the contents into the extremity of the proboscis. This she accomplished without spilling a drop, and she delivered the empty bottle to her keeper before she attempted to discharge the contents of the trunk into her mouth. The affection of this poor animal for her keeper was so great, that she would cry after him whenever he was absent for more than a few hours. She was about twenty-nine years old when she died, early in 1829, of what was understood to be pulmonary consumption.

It is not always, however, for mere amusement or curiosity that the docility of the elephant is exhibited: it would say little for human ingenuity, were not the strength of such a powerful animal brought to bear upon useful and necessary operations. We have seen that in India he is made a beast of carriage and draught, carrying indifferently the howdah and baggage-chest, and dragging the ponderous artillery-car; but besides these, there are many other

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minor occupations in which he can be successfully engaged. Thus elephants were at one time employed in the launching of ships, being trained to push in unison with their powerful fronts and heavy bodies. It is told of one that was directed to force a large vessel into the water, but which proved superior to his strength, that, on being upbraided for his laziness, the distressed animal increased his efforts with such vehemence, that he fractured his skull on the spot. In piling wood, drawing water, removing obstructions from the way of an army on march, &c. the elephant is highly serviceable; and if properly directed, will perform his duties with astonishing precision. 'I have seen,' says M. D'Obsonville, 'two occupied in beating down a wall, which their keepers had desired them to do, and encouraged them by a promise of fruits and brandy. They combined their efforts; and doubling up their trunks, which were guarded from injury by leather, thrust against the strongest part of the wall, and by reiterated shocks continued their attacks, still observing and following the effect of the equilibrium with their eyes; then at last making one grand effort, they suddenly drew back together, that they might not be wounded by the ruins.' It is also told of an elephant at Barrackpore, that would swim laden with parcels to the opposite shore of the Ganges, and then unload himself with undeviating accuracy. In the year 1811, a lady, staying with her husband, an officer in the Company's service, at a house near the fort of Travancore, was astonished one morning to observe an elephant, unattended, marching into the courtyard, carrying a box in his trunk, apparently very heavy. He deposited this, and going his way, soon returned with a similar box, which he placed by the side of the other. He continued this operation till he had formed a considerable pile, arranged with undeviating order. The boxes contained the treasure of the rajah of Travancore, who had died in the night, and of whose property the English commander had taken possession, thus removing the more valuable for greater security.

Much of what is called docility in animals arises from mere unreasoning habit, forced upon them by frequent repetition, by food, punishing them when the act is ill executed, and by giving them delicacies when it is well performed. Thus a horse will go to his own stall, and stand in it untied as well as when tied; go to and from the water, place himself between the shafts of the cart, and do other similar acts without any interference; just as an elephant will tie its own legs at night, or kneel when a person of rank passes by. But there are many duties which the latter will learn to perform almost at first sight, the knowledge of which he acquires with an aptitude that would do credit even to human reason. 'I have myself,' says the author of *Twelve Years' Military Adventure*, 'seen the wife of a mahoud (for the followers often take their families with them to camp) give a baby in charge to an elephant, while she went on some business, and have been highly amused in observing the

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sagacity and care of the unwieldy nurse. The child, which, like most children, did not like to lie still in one position, would, as soon as left to itself, begin crawling about ; in which exercise it would probably get among the legs of the animal, or entangled in the branches of the trees on which he was feeding ; when the elephant would, in the most tender manner, disengage his charge, either by lifting it out of the way with his trunk, or by removing the impediments to its free progress. If the child had crawled to such a distance as to verge upon the limits of his range (for the animal was chained by the leg to a peg driven into the ground), he would stretch out his trunk, and lift it back as gently as possible to the spot whence it started.'

Perhaps the docility of the elephant could not be better illustrated than by the aptitude and precision which it manifests in the capture of its wild brethren. The female decoys are the very impersonations of duplicity and cunning : they can be taught not only to lavish their false caresses, but to bind the fetters of the captive ; nay, they even outstrip their lessons, and seem to rejoice in the capture. Dr Darwin tells us that he was informed by a gentleman of veracity, that in some parts of the East the elephant is taught to walk on a narrow path between two pitfalls, which are covered with turf, and then to go into the woods and induce the wild herd to come that way. The decoy walks slowly onward till near the trap, and then bustles away as if in sport or in fear, passing safely between the pits, while some of those which follow in the wake are inevitably entangled. The same gentleman says also, that it was universally observed that such wild elephants as had escaped the snare, always pursued the traitor with the utmost vehemence ; and if they could overtake him, which sometimes happened, they beat him to death.

ATTACHMENT AND GRATITUDE.

The elephant, when carefully tamed, is one of the most gentle, most obedient, and most affectionate of all domestic animals. He is so fond of his keeper that he caresses him, strives to please him, and even to anticipate his commands. His attachment, indeed, sometimes becomes so strong, and his affection so warm and durable, that he has been known to die of sorrow when in a paroxysm of madness he had killed his guide. This disposition, however, is wholly acquired ; in a state of nature he has no regard for man, but shuns rather than seeks his presence. Whether this acquired regard be the result of fear, of habitual obedience brought about by a system of rewards and punishments, or of an innate gentleness which insensibly attaches itself to that which daily surrounds it, it would be difficult to decide, though, along with most naturalists, we are inclined to adopt the latter opinion. The animal is naturally

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gregarious, and when denied the companionship of its fellows, will, like the horse, dog, &c. expend its sympathies on those creatures with which it is most familiar.

In the *Philosophical Transactions* a story is related of an elephant having such an attachment for a very young child, that he was never happy but when it was near him. The nurse used, therefore, very frequently to take the child in its cradle and place it between its feet. This he at length became so much accustomed to, that he would never eat his food except when it was present. When the child slept, he used to drive off the flies with his proboscis; and when it cried, he would move the cradle backwards and forwards, and thus rock it again to sleep. Nor will this instance of sagacious affection appear at all improbable to those who are acquainted with the thorough intimacy which generally subsists between the family of the Indian mahoud and his elephant, which may be said literally to live under the same roof, eat the same bread, and drink the same water.

We have seen how attached the Duke of Devonshire's elephant became to her keeper, crying after him when absent, and even refusing to be comforted. The same affection almost always subsists between the Indian mahoud and his charge. Nor is it at all surprising, seeing that he is ever with it, feeds it, cleans it, adorns and caresses it, with unflinching attention.

The following instances of gratitude are in the highest degree praiseworthy, and might well put to the blush many who lay claim to a higher position in the scale of intelligence. An elephant in Ajmeer, which passed frequently through the bazaar, or market, as he went by a certain herb-woman, always received from her a mouthful of greens. At length he was seized with one of his periodical fits of rage, broke from his fetters, and, running through the market, put the crowd to flight, and among others this woman, who in her haste forgot a little child she had brought with her. The animal, gratefully recollecting the spot where his benefactress was wont to sit, laid aside his fury, and, taking up the infant gently in his trunk, placed it safely on a stall before a neighbouring house. Again, there was a soldier at Pondicherry who was accustomed, whenever he received his share of liquor, to carry a certain quantity of it to one of these animals, and by this means a very cordial intimacy was formed between them. Having drunk rather too freely one day, and finding himself pursued by the guards, who were going to take him to prison, the soldier took refuge under the elephant's body, and fell asleep. The guard tried in vain to force him from this asylum, as the animal protected him most strenuously with his trunk. The following morning, the soldier, recovering from his drunken fit, shuddered with horror to find himself stretched under the belly of this huge animal. The elephant, who, without doubt, perceived the man's embarrassment, caressed him with his trunk, in order to

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inspire him with courage, and made him understand that he might now depart in safety.

RESENTMENT AND REVENGE.

Though generally mild, docile, and even affectionate, there are none of the domestic animals half so prone to resent injuries and insults as the elephant. The horse, for example, will endure patiently under the hardest labour, starvation, and the harshest treatment—rarely if ever avenging the brutalities to which he is exposed. Not so with the elephant; for, goad him beyond his accustomed speed, and he becomes furious; overload him, and he throws off his burden; refuse him a promised delicacy, and he punishes the insult; treat him harshly, and he will trample the aggressor to death. The manner in which he resents his insults is, however, frequently as ludicrous as his revenge is fatal.

Every one must have read of the mishaps of the Delhi tailor. This individual was in the habit of giving some little delicacy, such as an apple, to an elephant that daily passed by his shop, and so accustomed had the animal become to this treatment, that it regularly put its trunk in at his window to receive the expected gift. One day, however, the tailor being out of humour, thrust his needle into the beast's proboscis, telling it to be gone, as he had nothing to give it. The creature passed on, apparently unmoved; but on coming to the next dirty pool of water, filled its trunk, and returned to the shop-window, into which it discharged the whole contents, thoroughly drenching poor Snip and the wares by which he was surrounded. Again, a painter was desirous of drawing the elephant kept in the menagerie at Versailles in an uncommon attitude, which was that of holding his trunk raised up in the air, with his mouth open. The painter's boy, in order to keep the animal in this posture, threw fruit into his mouth; but as he had frequently deceived him, and made him an offer only of throwing the fruit, he grew angry; and, as if he had known the painter's intention of drawing him was the cause of the affront that was offered him, instead of revenging himself on the lad, he turned his resentment on his master, and taking up a quantity of water in his trunk, threw it on the paper which the painter was drawing on, and spoilt it.

A sentinel belonging to the menagerie at Paris was always very careful in requesting the spectators not to give the elephants anything to eat. This conduct particularly displeased the female, who beheld him with a very unfavourable eye, and had several times endeavoured to correct his interference by sprinkling his head with water from her trunk. One day, when several persons were collected to view these animals, a bystander offered the female a bit of bread. The sentinel perceived it; but the moment he opened his mouth to give his usual admonition, she, placing herself immediately before

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him, discharged in his face a violent stream of water. A general laugh ensued ; but the sentinel having calmly wiped his face, stood a little to one side, and continued as vigilant as before. Soon afterwards he found himself under the necessity of repeating his admonition to the spectators ; but no sooner was this uttered, than the female laid hold of his musket, twirled it round with her trunk, trod it under her feet, and did not restore it till she had twisted it nearly into the form of a corkscrew. It is stated, amongst the traditionary stories of elephant resentment, that Pidcock, to whom the Exeter 'Change menagerie formerly belonged, had for some years a custom of treating himself and his elephant in the evening with a glass of spirits, for which the animal regularly looked. Pidcock invariably gave the elephant the first glass out of the bottle, till one night he exclaimed : ' You have been served first long enough, and it's my turn now.' The proud beast was offended, refused the glass when he was denied the precedence, and never more would join his master in his revelries.

Innumerable stories of ludicrous resentment might be collected, but we shall close this section with the following abridgments from the *Menageries* : ' Mr Williamson tells an anecdote of an elephant who used to be called the Pangul, or fool, but who vindicated his claim to another character in a very singular manner. He had refused to bear a greater weight upon a march than was agreeable to him, by constantly pulling part of the load off his back ; and a quarter-master of brigade, irritated at his obstinacy, threw a tent-pin at his head. In a few days after, as the animal was going from the camp to water, he overtook the quarter-master, and seizing him with his trunk, lifted him into a large tamarind-tree which overhung the road, leaving him to cling to the boughs, and get down as well as he could. Lieutenant Shipp, to try this memory of injuries, gave an elephant a large quantity of Cayenne pepper between some bread. The animal was much irritated by the offence, and about six weeks after, when the unsuspecting joker went to fondle him, he endured the caresses very placidly, but finished the affair by drenching his persecutor with dirty water from head to foot.'

It is not always, however, in this harmless and jocular manner that the elephant displays his resentment, as the following well-authenticated instances will shew : An elephant that was exhibited in France some years ago, seemed to know when it was mocked by any person, and remembered the affront till an opportunity for revenge occurred. A man deceived it, by pretending to throw something into its mouth : the animal gave him such a blow with its trunk as knocked him down, and broke two of his ribs ; after which it trampled upon him, broke one of his legs, and bending down on its knees, endeavoured to push its tusks into his body ; but they luckily ran into the ground on each side of his thigh, without doing him any injury. In this case the provocation was certainly not

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deserving of the punishment ; though in many instances the animal is but too justly excited. M. Navarette tells us that at Macassar an elephant-driver had a cocoa-nut given him, which, out of wantonness, he struck twice against his elephant's head to break. The day following, the animal saw some cocoa-nuts exposed in the street for sale, and taking one of them up with its trunk, beat it about the driver's head till the man was completely dead. 'This comes,' says our authority, 'of jesting with elephants.'

Some years ago, at Liverpool Zoological Gardens, after delighting groups of young holiday folks by his skilful and docile performances, the elephant gave some offence to one of the deputy-keepers, and was by him chastised with a broomstick. No one was by to see what occurred in the next few minutes ; but at the expiration of that time, the unfortunate deputy-keeper was found dead at the feet of the insulted beast, having been killed, in all probability, by a single blow of the animal's trunk. The body presented a most appalling spectacle, the arms and legs being fractured in several places, the skull cloven, and the entire body crushed to pieces by the animal, who, it would appear, in his rage, had repeatedly trampled upon him.

MEMORY AND FORCE OF HABIT.

That the elephant remembers with precision the lessons taught him, that he will resent an injury long after it has been committed, and will recognise an old guide many years after he has been parted from him, are facts that sufficiently prove the possession of a very retentive memory. In this respect, however, he is by no means superior to the horse ; but seems to associate his ideas more slowly, and with greater difficulty. Many feats ascribed to his sagacity and memory are eminently the effect of habit—meaning thereby the following of a particular line of conduct which one has been accustomed to, without any special effort of the understanding at the time of its repetition. The following instances, recorded in the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1799, seem to establish this position : 'A female elephant that had escaped to the forest, and had enjoyed her liberty for more than ten years, was at last caught, along with a number of others, in a keddah. After the others had been secured, with the exception of seven or eight young ones, the hunters, who recognised this female, were ordered to call on her by name. She immediately came to the side of the ditch within the enclosure, on which some of the drivers were desired to carry in a plantain-tree, the leaves of which she not only took from their hands with her trunk, but opened her mouth for them to put a leaf into it, which they did, stroking and caressing her, and calling to her by name. One of the trained elephants was now ordered to be brought to her, and the driver to take her by the ear and order her to lie down. At

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first she did not like the koomkee to go near her, and retired to a distance, seeming angry; but when the drivers, who were on foot, called to her, she came immediately, and allowed them to stroke and caress her as before; and in a few minutes after, permitted the trained elephants to be familiar. A driver from one of these then fastened a rope round her body, and instantly jumped on her back, which at the moment she did not like, but was soon reconciled to it. A small cord was then put round her neck for the driver to put his feet in, who, seating himself on the neck in the usual manner, drove her about the enclosure in the same manner as any of the tame elephants. After this he ordered her to lie down, which she instantly did; nor did she rise till she was desired. He fed her from his seat, gave her his stick to hold, which she took with her trunk and put into her mouth, kept, and then returned it, as she was directed, and as she had formerly been accustomed to do. In short, she was so obedient, that had there been more wild elephants in the enclosure, she would have been useful in securing them.

'In June 1787, a male elephant, taken the year before, was travelling, in company with some others, towards Chittagong, laden with baggage; and having come upon a tiger's track, which elephants discover readily by the smell, he took fright and ran off to the woods, in spite of all the efforts of his driver. On entering the wood, the driver saved himself by springing from the animal, and clinging to the branch of a tree under which he was passing. When the elephant had got rid of his driver, he soon contrived to shake off his load. As soon as he ran away, a trained female was despatched after him, but could not get up in time to prevent his escape.

'Eighteen months after this, when a herd of elephants had been taken, and had remained several days in the enclosure, till they were enticed into the outlet, there tied, and led out in the usual manner, one of the drivers, viewing a male elephant very attentively, declared he resembled the one which had run away. This excited the curiosity of every one to go and look at him; but when any person came near, the animal struck at him with his trunk, and in every respect appeared as wild and outrageous as any of the other elephants. An old hunter at length coming up and examining him, declared that he was the very elephant that had made his escape.

'Confident of this, he boldly rode up to him on a tame elephant, and ordered him to lie down, pulling him by the ear at the same time. The animal seemed taken by surprise, and instantly obeyed the word of command, uttering at the same time a peculiar shrill squeak through his trunk, as he had formerly been known to do, by which he was immediately recognised by every person who was acquainted with this peculiarity.

'Thus we see that this elephant, for the space of eight or ten days, during which he was in the enclosure, appeared equally wild and fierce with the boldest elephant then taken; but the moment he was

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addressed in a commanding tone, the recollection of his former obedience seemed to rush upon him at once, and, without any difficulty, he permitted a driver to be seated on his neck, who in a few days made him as tractable as ever.

'A female elephant belonging to a gentleman at Calcutta being ordered from the upper country to Chotygoné, by chance broke loose from her keeper, and was lost in the woods. The excuses which the keeper made were not admitted. It was supposed that he had sold the elephant : his wife and family therefore were sold for slaves, and he was himself condemned to work upon the roads. About twelve years afterwards, this man was ordered up into the country to assist in catching the wild elephants. The keeper fancied he saw his long-lost elephant in a group that was before them. He was determined to go up to it ; nor could the strongest representations of the great danger dissuade him from his purpose. When he approached the creature, she knew him ; and giving him three salutes by waving her trunk in the air, knelt down and received him on her back. She afterwards assisted in securing the other elephants, and likewise brought with her three young ones, which she had produced during her absence. The keeper recovered his character, and, as a recompense for his sufferings and intrepidity, had an annuity settled on him for life. This elephant was afterwards in the possession of Governor Hastings.'

These, and several other instances, establish the possession of a very good memory ; but not a memory associated with any high degree of reasoning, otherwise the animals would never have allowed themselves to be again entrapped. It is clear that in the above cases habitual obedience was more powerful than reason ; the sudden rush of recollection overpowering that faculty, and making them the slaves of that higher intelligence to which all flesh has been declared to be subject.

GENERAL SAGACITY.

According to some, the elephant is the most sagacious of animals, while others consider him inferior to the horse and dog. Taking the brain as the index of intelligence, there is nothing in the proportionate size of that organ which would lead to the former opinion, and therefore we must look to the general conduct of the animal for evidence of the assertion. His docility, obedience, attachment, and memory all certainly point to no mean degree of endowment ; but perhaps not more than is evinced by the horse and dog ; while his actions are rendered more perfect only through the instrumentality of his trunk. How far he is superior in general sagacity, that is, in reasoning from cause to effect, and in adapting ways and means to an end, the reader will be enabled to decide from the subjoined anecdotes. And here it will be observed, that we distinguish between

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docility and sagacity ; for although the former should be most apparent where the latter quality predominates, yet many animals, such as even the pig, be taught by force of habit to perform many astonishing feats, when they are avowedly destitute of general intelligence.

The following, given on the authority of the Rev. Robert Caunter, seems to be a purely deliberative act ; and that, be it observed, by the animal when in a wild state, and perfectly unacquainted with the devices of human training : ' A small body of sepoy's stationed at an outpost—Fort de Galle, in Ceylon—to protect a granary containing a large quantity of rice, was suddenly removed, in order to quiet some unruly villagers, a few miles distant, who had set our authorities at defiance. Two of our party happened to be on the spot at the moment. No sooner had the sepoy's withdrawn, than a herd of wild elephants, which had been long noticed in the neighbourhood, made their appearance in front of the granary. They had been preceded by a scout, which returned to the herd, and having no doubt satisfied them, in a language which to them needed no interpreter, that the coast was clear, they advanced at a brisk pace towards the building. When they arrived within a few yards of it, quite in martial order, they made a sudden stand, and began deliberately to reconnoitre the object of their attack. Nothing could be more wary and methodical than their proceedings. The walls of the granary were of solid brickwork, very thick ; and the only opening into the building was in the centre of the terraced roof, to which the ascent was by a ladder. On the approach of the elephants, the two astonished spectators clambered up into a lofty banyan-tree, in order to escape mischief. The conduct of the four-footed besiegers was such as strongly to excite their curiosity, and they therefore watched their proceedings with intense anxiety. The two spectators were so completely screened by the foliage of the tree to which they had resorted for safety, that they could not be perceived by the elephants, though they could see very well through the little vistas formed by the separated branches what was going on below. Had there been a door to the granary, all difficulty of obtaining an entrance would have instantly vanished ; but four thick brick walls were obstacles which seemed at once to defy both the strength and sagacity of these dumb robbers. Nothing daunted by the magnitude of the difficulty which they had to surmount, they successively began their operations at the angles of the building. A large male elephant, with tusks of immense proportions, laboured for some time to make an impression ; but after a while, his strength was exhausted, and he retired. The next in size and strength then advanced, and exhausted his exertions, with no better success. A third then came forward, and applying those tremendous levers with which his jaws were armed, and which he wielded with such prodigious might, he at length succeeded in dislodging a brick. An

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opening once made, other elephants advanced, when an entrance was soon obtained, sufficiently large to admit the determined marauders. As the whole herd could not be accommodated at once, they divided into small bodies of three or four. One of them entered, and when they had taken their fill, they retired, and their places were immediately supplied by the next in waiting, until the whole herd, upwards of twenty, had made a full meal. By this time a shrill sound was heard from one of the elephants, which was readily understood, when those that were still in the building immediately rushed out, and joined their companions. One of the first division, after retiring from the granary, had acted as sentinel while the rest were enjoying the fruits of their sagacity and perseverance. He had so stationed himself as to be enabled to observe the advance of an enemy from any quarter, and upon perceiving the troops as they returned from the village, he sounded the signal of retreat, when the whole herd, flourishing their trunks, moved rapidly into the jungle. The soldiers, on their return, found that the animals had devoured the greater part of the rice. A ball from a field-piece was discharged at them in their retreat; but they only wagged their tails, as if in mockery, and soon disappeared in the recesses of their native forests.

In general, the elephant makes less use of his strength than his address, often applying the most dexterous methods of accomplishing his ends. 'I was one day,' says Jesse in his *Gleanings in Natural History*, 'feeding the poor elephant (who was so barbarously put to death at Exeter 'Change) with potatoes, which he took out of my hand. One of them, a round one, fell on the floor, just out of the reach of his proboscis. He leaned against his wooden bar, put out his trunk, and could just touch the potato, but could not pick it up. After several ineffectual efforts, he at last blew the potato against the opposite wall with sufficient force to make it rebound, and he then without difficulty secured it.' M. Phillipe, quoted by Buffon, was an eye-witness to the following equally wonderful facts: He one day went to the river at Goa, near which place a large ship was building, and where an area was filled with beams and planks for the purpose. Some men tied the ends of heavy beams with a rope, which was handed to an elephant, who carried it to his mouth, and after twisting it round his trunk, drew it, without any conductor, to the place where the ship was building. One of the animals sometimes drew beams so large, that more than twenty men would have been necessary to move them. But what surprised M. Phillipe most was, that when other beams obstructed the road, this elephant raised the ends of his own beam, or edged it forwards, as the case might be, that it might clear those which lay in his way. Could the most enlightened man have done more?

At Mahé, on the coast of Malabar, M. Toreesa tells he had an opportunity of admiring the sagacity of an elephant displayed in a

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and what he could not effect by threats, he was enabled to do by the repeated promise of plenty of rack. Incited by this, the animal again went to work, raised himself considerably higher, until, by a partial removal of the masonry round the top of the well, he was enabled to step out. The whole affair occupied about fourteen hours.'

Such are the accounts, which our limits will permit us to glean, as illustrative of the disposition and manners of this most powerful and intelligent animal. Making every allowance for the exaggeration of the writers, these records of his docility, obedience, attachment, and sagacity place him in a very favourable light; and though somewhat prone to resentment, the results are seldom fatal, save where the provocation has been unusually great. On the whole, he is a patient and tractable animal, especially useful under a burning sun, and in a country where there are no roads; presuming always that there is an abundant and cheap supply of forage. He can never, however, become so endeared to man as the dog and the horse, for these are fitted by their constitution and habits to become the inhabitants of almost every region, whilst the elephant must ever be confined to the range which nature has originally assigned him. As a domestic animal, he can at best be but the associate of a half-civilised existence; for so soon as man begins to construct roads and invent machines, to cultivate his lands and economise the produce, the elephant becomes not only useless, but positively detrimental. Already he has receded from the interior of India, and is only found wild in the forests of Dshemna, Nepaul, some parts of Ghauts Tarrai, in Ava, and in Ceylon. In Africa, where he is hunted for his spoils, and not tamed, he has disappeared from Cape Colony, from the northern regions of that continent, and from Senegambia; and will in all likelihood be the more eagerly hunted the scarcer he becomes. As portion of our terrestrial fauna, the elephant may linger on for a century or two; but to us he appears rapidly approaching the period of his extinction—a period when he must pass away before adverse conditions, in like manner as his former congeners, the mammoth and mastodon.





SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

BEAUTY OF INSECTS.



BSERVE the insect race, ordained to keep
The lazy Sabbath of a half-year's sleep.
Entombed beneath the filmy web they lie,
And wait the influence of a kinder sky.
When vernal sunbeams pierce their dark retreat,

The heaving tomb distends with vital heat ;
The full-formed brood, impatient of their cell,
Start from their trance, and burst their silken shell.
Trembling awhile they stand, and scarcely dare
To launch at once upon the untried air.
At length assured, they catch the favouring gale,
And leave their sordid spoils, and high in ether sail.

Lo ! the bright train their radiant wings unfold,
With silver fringed, and freckled o'er with gold.
On the gay bosom of some fragrant flower,
They, idly fluttering, live their little hour ;
Their life all pleasure, and their task all play,
All spring their age, and sunshine all their day.
Not so the child of sorrow, wretched man :
His course with toil concludes, with pain began,

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

That his high destiny he might discern,
And in misfortune's school this lesson learn—
Pleasure's the portion of the inferior kind ;
But glory, virtue, Heaven for man designed.

What atom forms of insect life appear !
And who can follow Nature's pencil here ?
Their wings with azure, green, and purple glossed,
Studded with coloured eyes, with gems embossed,
Inlaid with pearl, and marked with various stains
Of lively crimson, through their dusky veins.
Some shoot like living stars athwart the night,
And scatter from their wings a vivid light,
To guide the Indian to his tawny loves,
As through the woods with cautious step he moves.
See the proud giant of the beetle race,
With shining arms his polished limbs enchain !
Like some stern warrior formidably bright,
His steely sides reflect a gleaming light ;
On his large forehead spreading horns he wears,
And high in air the branching antlers bears ;
O'er many an inch extends his wide domain,
And his rich treasury swells with hoarded grain.

—MRS BARBAULD.

THE ANT.—INDUSTRY.

THESE emmets, how little they are in our eyes !
We tread them to dust, and a troop of them dies,
Without our regard or concern :
Yet as wise as we are, if sent to their school,
There's many a sluggard and many a fool
Some lessons of wisdom might learn.

They don't wear their time out in sleeping or play,
But gather up corn in a sunshiny day,
And for winter they lay up their stores ;
They manage their work in such regular forms,
One would think they foresaw all the frosts and the storms,
And so brought their food within doors.

But I have less sense than a poor creeping ant,
If I take not due care for the things I shall want,
Nor provide against dangers in time ;
When death and old age shall stare in my face,
What a wretch shall I be in the end of my days,
If I trifle away all their prime !

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

Now, now while my strength and my youth are in bloom,
Let me think what shall save me when sickness shall come,
And pray that my sins be forgiven.
Let me read in good books, and believe, and obey,
That when death turns me out of this cottage of clay,
I may dwell in a palace in heaven.

—DR WATTS.

TO THE CICADA.

HAPPY insect! blithe and gay,
Seated on the sunny spray,
And drunk with dew, the leaves among,
Singing sweet thy chirping song.

All the various season's treasures,
All the products of the plains,
Thus lie open to thy pleasures,
Favourite of the rural swains.

On thee the Muses fix their choice,
And Phoebus adds his own,
Who first inspired thy lively voice,
And tuned thy pleasing tone.

Thy cheerful note in wood and vale
Fills every heart with glee ;
And Summer smiles with double charms
While thus proclaimed by thee.

Like gods canst thou the nectar sip,
A lively chirping elf ;
From labour free, and free from care,
A little god thyself !

—ANACREON.

TO A FLY.

PRITHEE, little buzzing fly,
Eddying round my taper, why
Is it that its quivering light
Dazzling captivates your sight ?
Bright my taper is, 'tis true ;
Trust me, 'tis too bright for you.
'Tis a flame, fond thing, beware—
'Tis a flame you cannot bear.

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

Touch it, and 'tis instant fate ;
Take my counsel ere too late :
Buzz no longer round and round—
Settle on the wall or ground :
Sleep till morning : with the day
Rise, and use your wings you may :
Use them then of danger clear.
Wait till morning ; do, my dear.

Lo ! my counsel nought avails ;
Round, and round, and round it sails—
Sails with idle unconcern.
Prithee, trifler, canst thou burn ?
Madly heedless as thou art,
Know thy danger, and depart.
Why persist ? I plead in vain :
Singed it falls, and writhes in pain.

Is not this, deny who can—
Is not this a draught of man ?
Like the fly, he rashly tries
Pleasure's burning sphere, and dies.
Vain the friendly caution ; still
He rebels, alas ! and will.
What I sing let pride apply :
Flies are weak, and man's a fly.

—*Anonymous.*

TO THE SAME.

BUSY, curious, thirsty fly,
Drink with me, and drink as I ;
Freely welcome to my cup,
Couldst thou sip, and sip it up.
Make the most of life you may ;
Life is short, and wears away.
Both alike are mine and thine,
Hastening quick to their decline :
Thine's a summer, mine no more,
Though repeated to threescore ;
Threescore summers, when they're gone,
Will appear as short as one.

—OLDYS

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

THE BEE-HIVE.

WHAT various wonders may observers see
In a small insect—the sagacious bee !
Mark how the little untaught builders square
Their rooms, and in the dark their lodgings rear !
Nature's mechanics, they unwearied strive,
And fill with curious labyrinths the hive.
See what bright strokes of architecture shine
Through the whole frame—what beauty, what design !
Each odoriferous cell and waxen tower—
The yellow pillage of the rifled flower—
Has twice three sides, the only figure fit
To which the labourers may their stores commit,
Without the loss of matter or of room,
In all the wondrous structure of the comb.
Next view, spectator, with admiring eyes,
In what just order all the apartments rise !
So regular their equal sides cohere,
The adapted angles so each other bear ;
That by mechanic rules, refined and bold,
They are at once upheld, at once uphold.
Does not this skill even vie with reason's reach ?
Can Euclid more, can more Palladio teach ?
Each verdant hill the industrious chemists climb,
Extract the riches of the blooming thyme ;
And, provident of winter long before,
They stock their caves, and hoard their flowing store.
In peace they rule their state with prudent care,
Wisely defend, or wage offensive war.

—Weekly Amusement.

TO THE GRASSHOPPER.

HAPPY insect ! what can be
In happiness compared to thee ?
Fed with nourishment divine,
The dewy morning's gentle wine !
Nature waits upon thee still,
And thy verdant cup does fill.
Thou dost drink, and dance, and sing,
Happier than the happiest king !
All the fields which thou dost see,
All the plants belong to thee ;

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

All that summer hours produce,
Fertile made with early juice.
Man for thee does sow and plough ;
Farmer he, and landlord thou !
Thou dost innocently enjoy,
Nor does thy luxury destroy.
Thee country hinds with gladness hear,
Prophet of the ripened year !
To thee, of all things upon earth,
Life's no longer than thy mirth.
Happy insect ! happy thou,
Dost neither age nor winter know.
But when thou 'st drunk, and danced, and sung
Thy fill, the flowery leaves among,
Sated with thy summer feast,
Thou retir'st to endless rest.

—COWLI

TO THE CRICKET.

LITTLE inmate, full of mirth,
Chirping on my kitchen hearth ;
Wheresoe'er be thine abode,
Always harbinger of good.
Pay me for thy warm retreat
With a song more soft and sweet ;
In thy turn thou shalt receive
Such a strain as I can give.

Thus thy praise shall be exprest,
Inoffensive, welcome guest !
While the rat is on the scout,
And the mouse with curious snout,
With what vermin else infest
Every dish, and spoil the best ;
Frisking thus before the fire,
Thou hast all thine heart's desire.

Though in voice and shape they be
Formed as if akin to thee,
Thou surpassest, happier far
Happiest grasshoppers that are ;
Theirs is but a summer's song,
Thine endures the winter long,
Unimpaired and shrill and clear
Melody throughout the year.

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

Neither night nor dawn of day,
Puts a period to thy play :
Sing, then—and extend thy span
Far beyond the date of man.
Wretched man, whose years are spent,
In repining discontent,
Lives not, aged though he be,
Half a span, compared with thee.

—ANACREON.

—COWPER.

TO A BEE

THOU wert out betimes, thou busy, busy bee !

When abroad I took my early way.
Before the cow from her resting-place
Had risen up, and left her trace

On the meadow with dew so gray,
I saw thee, thou busy, busy bee.

Thou wert alive, thou busy, busy bee !

When the crowd in their sleep were dead ;
Thou wert abroad in the freshest hour,
When the sweetest odour comes from the flower.

Man will not learn to leave his lifeless bed,
And be wise, and copy thee, thou busy, busy bee !

Thou wert working late, thou busy, busy bee !

After the fall of the cistus flower ;
I heard thee last as I saw thee first,
When the primrose-tree blossom was ready to burst—
In the coolness of the evening hour
I heard thee, thou busy, busy bee !

Thou art a miser, thou busy, busy bee !

Late and early at employ ;
Still on thy golden stores intent,
Thy youth in heaping and hoarding is spent,
What thy age will never enjoy.
I will not copy thee, thou miserly bee !

Thou art a fool, thou busy, busy bee !

Thus for another to toil !
Thy master waits till thy work is done,
Till the latest flowers of the ivy are gone,
And will murder thee, thou poor little bee !

—SOUTHEY.

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

THE GLOW-WORM.

BENEATH the hedge, or near the stream,
A worm is known to stray ;
That shews by night a lucid beam,
Which disappears by day.

Disputes have been, and still prevail,
From whence his rays proceed ;
Some give that honour to his tail,
And others to his head.

But this is sure—the hand of Might
That kindles up the skies,
Gives him a modicum of light
Proportioned to his size.

Perhaps indulgent Nature meant,
By such a lamp bestowed,
To bid the traveller as he went
Be careful where he trod ;

Nor crush a worm, whose useful light
Might serve, however small,
To shew a stumbling stone by night,
And save him from a fall.

Whate'er she meant, this truth divine
Is legible and plain—
'Tis power Almighty bids him shine,
Nor bids him shine in vain.

Ye proud and wealthy, let this theme
Teach humbler thoughts to you ;
Since such a reptile has its gem,
And boasts its splendour too.

—COWPER.

BIRTH OF THE BUTTERFLY.

THE shades of night were scarcely fled ;
The air was mild, the winds were still ;
And slow the slanting sunbeams spread,
O'er wood and lawn, o'er heath and hill.

From fleecy clouds of pearly hue
That drop a short but balmy shower,
That hung like gems of morning dew,
On every tree and every flower.

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

And from the blackbird's mellow throat
Was poured so loud and long a swell,
As echoed with responsive note
From mountain side and shadowy dell.

When, bursting forth to life and light,
The offspring of enraptured May,
The butterfly on pinions bright,
Launched in full splendour on the day.

Unconscious of a mother's care,
No infant wretchedness she knew ;
But as she felt the vernal air,
At once to full perfection grew.

Her slender form, ethereal, light,
Her velvet-textured wings unfold,
With all the rainbow's colours bright,
And dropt with spots of burnished gold.

Trembling awhile, with joy she stood,
And felt the sun's enlivening ray,
Drank from the skies the vital flood,
And wondered at her plumage gay.

And balanced oft her brodered wings,
Through fields of air prepared to sail ;
Then on her venturous journey springs,
And floats along the rising gale.

Go, child of pleasure, range the fields—
Taste all the joys that spring can give—
Partake what bounteous summer yields,
And live while yet 'tis thine to live.

Go, sip the rose's fragrant dew—
The lily's honeyed cup explore—
From flower to flower the search renew,
And rifle all the woodbine's store.

And let me trace thy vagrant flight,
Thy moments, too, of short repose ;
And mark thee when, with fresh delight,
Thy golden pinions ope and close.

But hark ! while I thus musing stand,
Pours on the gale an airy note,
And breathing from a viewless band,
Soft silvery tones around me float.

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

They cease ; but still a voice I hear,
A whispered voice of hope and joy—
'Thy hour of rest approaches near,
Prepare thee, mortal ; thou must die !

'Yet start not ! on thy closing eyes
Another day shall still unfold ;
A sun of milder radiance rise,
A happier age of joys untold.

'Shall the poor worm that shocks thy sight—
The humblest form in Nature's train—
Thus rise in new-born lustre bright,
And yet the emblem teach in vain ?

'Ah, where were once her golden eyes,
Her glittering wings of purple pride ?
Concealed beneath a rude disguise !
A shapeless mass to earth allied.

'Like thee the hapless reptile lived,
Like thee she toiled, like thee she spun ;
Like thine, her closing hour arrived,
Her labours ceased, her web was done.

'And shalt thou, numbered with the dead,
No happier state of being know ?
And shall no future sorrow shed
On thee a beam of brighter glow ?

'Is this the bound of Power divine,
To animate an insect frame ?
Or shall not He, who moulded thine,
Wake at his will the vital flame ?

'Go, mortal ! in thy reptile state,
Enough to know to thee is given ;
Go, and the joyful truth relate,
Frail child of earth, bright heir of Heaven.'

—Rosc

THE NIGHTINGALE AND GLOW-WORM.

A NIGHTINGALE, that all day long
Had cheered the village with his song,
Nor yet at eve his note suspended,
Nor yet when eventide was ended,
Began to feel, as well he might,
The keen demands of appetite ;

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

When, looking eagerly around,
He spied far off, upon the ground,
A something shining in the dark,
And knew the glow-worm by his spark ;
So, stooping down from hawthorn top,
He thought to put him in his crop.

The worm, aware of his intent,
Harangued him thus, right eloquent :
'Did you admire my lamp,' quoth he,
'As much as I your minstrelsy,
You would abhor to do me wrong,
As much as I to spoil your song ;
For 'twas the self-same Power divine
Taught you to sing, and me to shine ;
That you with music, I with light,
Might beautify and cheer the night.'

The songster heard his short oration,
And warbling out his approbation,
Released him, as my story tells,
And found a supper somewhere else.

—COWPER.

TO THE SPIDER.

ARTIST, who underneath my table
Thy curious texture has displayed ;
Who, if we may believe the fable,
Wert once a lovely, blooming maid !

Insidious, restless, watchful spider,
Fear no officious damsel's broom,
Extend thy artful fabric wider,
And spread thy banners round my room.

Swept from the rich man's costly ceiling,
Thou'rt welcome to my homely roof ;
Here mayst thou find a peaceful dwelling,
And, undisturbed, attend thy woof.

While I thy wondrous fabric stare at,
And think on hapless poet's fate ;
Like thee confined to lonely garret,
And rudely banished rooms of state.

And as from out thy tortured body
Thou drawest thy slender string with pain,

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

So does he labour, like a noddy,
To spin materials from his brain.

He, for some fluttering tawdry creature,
That spreads her charms before his eye;
And that's a conquest little better
Than thine o'er captive butterfly.

Thus far, 'tis plain we both agree,
Perhaps our deaths may better shew it—
'Tis ten to one but penury
Ends both the spider and the poet.

—SHENSTONE

THE ANT AND THE CATERPILLAR.

As an ant, of his talents superiorly vain,
Was trotting, with consequence, over the plain,
A worm, in his progress remarkably slow,
Cried: 'Bless your good worship wherever you go!
I hope your great mightiness won't take it ill;
I pay my respects with a hearty good-will'
With a look of contempt and impertinent pride,
'Begone, you vile reptile!' his antship replied;
'Go—go, and lament your contemptible state,
But first, look at me; see my limbs how complete;
I guide all my motions with freedom and ease,
Run backward and forward, and turn when I please;
Of nature (grown weary) you shocking essay!
I spurn you thus from me—crawl out of my way.'

The reptile insulted, and vexed to the soul,
Crept onwards, and hid himself close in his hole;
But nature, determined to end his distress,
Soon sent him abroad in a butterfly's dress.

Ere long the proud ant, as repassing the road
(Fatigued from the harvest, and tugging his load),
The beau on a violet bank he beheld,
Whose vesture in glory a monarch's excelled;
His plumage expanded, 'twas rare to behold
So lovely a mixture of purple and gold.

The ant, quite amazed at a figure so gay,
Bowed low with respect, and was trudging away;
'Stop, friend,' says the butterfly; 'don't be surprised;
I once was the reptile you spurned and despised;
But now I can mount, in the sunbeams I play,
While you must for ever drudge on in your way.'

—CUNNINGHAM.

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

TRAVELS OF A BUTTERFLY.

THE woods, the rivers, and the meadows green,
With his air-cutting wings he measured wide;
Nor did he leave the mountains bare unseen,
Nor the rank grassy fen's delights untried.
But none of these, however sweet they been,
Might please his fancy, nor him cause abide.
This choiceful sense with every change doth flit;
No common things may please a wavering wit.

To the gay gardens his unstayed desire
Him wholly carried, to refresh his sprites;
There lavish Nature, in her best attire,
Pours forth sweet odours and alluring sights;
And Art, with her contending, doth aspire
T' excel the natural with made delights;
And all that fair or pleasant may be found,
In riotous excess doth there abound.

There he arriving, round about doth fly
From bed to bed, from one to other border,
And takes survey, with curious busy eye,
Of every flower and herb there set in order;
Now this, now that, he tasteth tenderly,
Yet none of them he rudely doth disorder;
Nor with his feet their silken wings deface,
But pastures on the pleasures of each place.

And evermore, with most variety
And change of sweetness (for all change is sweet),
He casts his glutton sense to satisfy;
Now sucking of the sap of herb most meet,
Or of the dew which yet on them does lie;
Now in the same bathing his tender feet;
And then he percheth on some bank thereby,
To weather him, and his moist wings to dry.

—SPENSER.

THE BUTTERFLY'S BALL.

COME, take up your hat, and away let us haste
To the butterfly's ball, and the grasshopper's feast;
The trumpeter gadfly has summoned the crew,
And the revels are now only waiting for you.

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

On the smooth-shaven grass, by the side of the wood,
Beneath a broad oak that for ages has stood,
See the children of earth and the tenants of air
For an evening's amusement together repair.

And there came the beetle, so blind and so black,
Who carried the emmet his friend on his back ;
And there was the gnat, and the dragon-fly too,
With all their relations—green, orange, and blue.

And there came the moth, in his plumage of down,
And the hornet with jacket of yellow and brown,
Who with him the wasp, his companion, did bring ;
But they promised that evening to lay by their sting.

And the sly little dormouse crept out of his hole,
And led to the feast his blind brother the mole ;
And the snail, with his horns peeping out from his shell,
Came from a great distance—the length of an ell.

A mushroom their table, and on it was laid
A water-dock leaf, which a tablecloth made ;
The viands were various, to each of their taste ;
And the bee brought his honey to crown the repast.

There, close on his haunches, so solemn and wise,
The frog from a corner looked up to the skies ;
And the squirrel, well pleased such diversion to see,
Sat cracking his nuts overhead in the tree.

Then out came the spider with fingers so fine,
To shew his dexterity on the tight line ;
From one branch to another his cobwebs he slung,
Then as quick as an arrow he darted along.

But just in the middle—oh ! shocking to tell !—
From his rope in an instant poor Harlequin fell ;
Yet he touched not the ground, but with talons outspread,
Hung suspended in air at the end of a thread.

Then the grasshopper came with a jerk and a spring,
Very long was his leg, though but short was his wing ;
He took but three leaps, and was soon out of sight,
Then chirped his own praises the rest of the night.

With step so majestic the snail did advance,
And promised the gazers a minuet to dance ;
But they all laughed so loud, that he pulled in his head,
And went to his own little chamber to bed.

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

Then as evening gave way to the shadows of night,
Their watchman, the glow-worm, came out with his light;
Then home let us hasten, while yet we can see,
For no watchman is waiting for you and for me.

— ROSCOE.

THE SPIDER'S SONG.

LOOK upon my web so fine,
See how threads with threads entwine;
If the evening wind alone
Breathe upon it, all is gone.
Thus within the darkest place
Creative Wisdom thou mayst trace;
Feeble though the insect be,
Allah speaks through that to thee.

As within the moonbeam I,
God in glory sits on high,
Sits where countless planets roll,
And from thence controls the whole:
There, with threads of thousand dyes,
Life's bewildering web he plies,
And the hand that holds them all
Lets not even the feeblest fall.

—*From the Danish of Oehlenschläger.*

THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET.

THE poetry of earth is never dead:
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead:
That is the grasshopper's: he takes the lead
In summer luxury; he has never done
With his delights; for when tired out with fun,
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.
The poetry of earth is ceasing never:
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
The cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever;
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
The grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

— KEATS.

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

ON THE SAME.

GREEN little vaulter in the sunny grass,
Catching your heart up at the feel of June ;
Sole voice left stirring midst the lazy noon,
When e'en the bees lag at the summoning brass :
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class
With those who think the candles come too soon,
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune
Nick the glad silent moments as they pass :
Oh, sweet and tiny cousins, that belong,
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,
Both have your sunshine ; both, though small, are strong
At your clear hearts ; and both were sent on earth
To ring in thoughtful ears this natural song,
In-doors and out, summer and winter—Mirth.
—LEIGH HUNT.

THE INNOCENT PILFERER.

NOT a flower can be found in the fields,
Or the spot that we till for our pleasure,
From the largest to least, but it yields
The bee, never wearied, a treasure.

Scarce any she quits unexplored,
With a diligence truly exact ;
Yet steal what she may for her hoard,
Leaves evidence none of the fact.

Her lucrative task she pursues,
And pilfers with so much address,
That none of their odour they lose,
Nor charm by their beauty the less.

Not thus inoffensively preys
The canker-worm, indwelling foe !
His voracity not thus allays
The sparrow, the finch, or the crow.

The worm, more expensively fed,
The pride of the garden devours ;
And birds pick the seed from the bed,
Still less to be spared than the flowers.

But she with such delicate skill,
Her pillage so fits for our use,

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

That the chemist in vain with his still
Would labour the like to produce.

Then grudge not her temperate meals,
Nor a benefit blame as a theft;
Since, stole she not all that she steals,
Neither honey nor wax would be left.

—COWPER.

THE FLOWER AND THE BUTTERFLY.

THE lowly flower said to the winged butterfly:

‘Leave not me.
How different are our fates! here a poor prisoner I,
Thou dost flee.
Yet we love one another, and from men we may
Live afar;
And we are like each other, for we both, they say,
Blossoms are.

‘But thou art borne aloft; to earth, O sad despite!
Chained am I.
Alas! with my soft breath I would embalm thy flight
Through the sky.
Ah no! thou flee’st too far; thou all the countless flowers
Fliest to greet;
I stand alone, to see my shadow turn for hours
At my feet.

‘Thou flee’st, returnest, flee’st, where bright like thee
Naught appears;
And so with each returning dawn thou findest me
All in tears.
O that with happy, faithful love we both may live,
Charmer mine!
Take thou, like me, root in the earth, or to me give
Wings like thine.’

VICTOR HUGO.

—C. WITCOMB.

TO THE WILD BEE.

ONE of my boyhood’s dearest loves wert thou,
Melodious rover of the summer bowers;
And never can I see or hear thee now,
Without a fond remembrance of the hours
When youth had gardened life for me with flowers!

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

Thou bringest to my mind the whitethorn bough,
The blooming heath, and foxglove of the fells ;
And, strange though it appear,
Methinks in every hum of thine I hear
A breeze-born tinkling from my country's own blue-bells.

Most sweet and cheering memories are these
To one who loves so well his native land—
Who loves its mountains, rivulets, and trees,
With all the flowers that spring from Nature's hand,
And not at man's elaborate command.
Yet, ah ! they are no more than memories :
For I have dwelt perforce this many a year
Amid the city's gloom,
And only hear thy quick and joyous boom,
When thou my dusky window haply passest near.

No longer can I closely watch thy range
From fruit to flower, from flower to budding tree,
Musing how lover-like thy course of change,
Yet from all ills of human passion free.
Though thou the summer's libertine may be,
And, having reft its sweetness, may estrange
Thyself thenceforward from the floweret's view,
No sting thou leavest behind—
No trace of reckless waste with thee we find—
And sweetly singest thou to earn thy honey-dew.

Oft have I marvelled at the faultless skill
With which thou trackest out thy dwelling-cave,
Winging thy way with seeming careless will
From mount to plain, o'er lake and winding wave :
The powers which God to earth's first creature gave,
Seem far less fit their purpose to fulfil
Than thy most wondrous instinct—if, indeed,
We should not think it shame,
To designate by such ambiguous name
The bright endowments which have been to thee decreed.

Hurtful, alas ! too oft are boyhood's loves.
The merle, encaged beneath the cottage eaves,
The pecking sparrow, or the cooing doves,
The chattering daw, most dexterous of thieves,
That oftentimes the careful housewife grieves,
And nimbly springs aloof when she reproves—
Happier by far these pets of youth would be,

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

Had they been left alone,
To human care or carelessness unknown,
Roaming amid the woods, unheeded still and free!

Well, too, for thee, wert thou thus left, poor bee!
In chase of thee and thy congeners all,
How oft have I coursed o'er the fields with glee,
Despite all hindrances of hedge or wall
That in my onward way might chance to fall:
But, ah! though fervently admiring thee,
Thy piebald stripes, perchance, or golden hues,
Too often then did death
Bring sudden pause to thy harmonious breath,
And all for thy sweet bag, so rich with balmy dew!

Nor could the beauty of thy earthen home,
In a green bank beneath a fir-tree made,
With its compact and over-arching dome,
Enveloping thy treasure-stores in shade—
Nor the fine roadway, serpentinely laid—
Nor all thy lovely cups of honeyed comb—
Protect thee from the instruments of ill,
Who forced thy tiny cave,
And made a place of peace and joy a grave,
Killing thy race, though still admiring while they kill.

Vainly against the thoughtless plunderers
Didst thou direct thy poison-pointed sting;
With branches from the super-pendent firs,
They beat thee down, and bruised thy little wing:
Thy queen, although a strangely gifted thing,
Saw ruin fall on all that once was hers,
Nor could the hand of fell destruction check:
Thy cells, of honey reft,
In one confused sod-mingled mass were left,
And thou, thy home and works, lay whelmed in one sad wreck.

Hence, though the wild flowers of my native hills
Before my mind at sight of thee arise,
And though my sense their fancied fragrance fills,
And their bright bloom delights my inner eyes,
Yet painful thoughts the while my breast chastise.
Oh, could poor man accomplish what he wills,
I would live o'er my days of youth again,
If but to cherish thee,
With kindness unalloyed, thou little busy bee,
And have thy memory unmixed with aught of pain!

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

But still to me thou art a thing of joy !
And the sweet hope is mine, that this new age
Shall see thee saved from all such sore annoy.
Following a path alike benign and sage,
The Man doth now his faculties engage
In teaching early wisdom to the Boy.
Youth now shall love thee, and have no desire
To hunt, or hurt, or kill ;
And thou henceforth shalt safely roam at will,
The happiest, merriest member of the summer choir !
—THOMAS SMIBERT.

THE WORM.

TURN, turn thy hasty foot aside,
Nor crush that helpless worm :
The frame thy wayward looks deride
None but a God could form.
The common Lord of all that move,
From whom thy being flowed,
A portion of His boundless love
On that poor worm bestowed.
The sun, the moon, the stars he made,
To all his creatures free ;
And spreads o'er earth the grassy blade
For worms as well as thee.
Let them enjoy their little day,
Their lowly bliss receive :
Oh, do not lightly take away
The life thou canst not give !

—GISBORNE.

ON A BUTTERFLY IN A CHURCH.

'Hinder him not ; he preacheth too.'
—*Jean Paul Richter.*

No, no ; to hinder him would be a sin ;
Let him come freely in !
He bears with him a silent eloquence
To charm each finer sense ;
A little living miracle he seems,
Come down on the sun's beams,
To preach of nature's gladness all day long !
Chief of the insect throng—

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

Tiny patrician, on whose bannery wings
Are bright emblazonings !
My mind doth image thee a radiant flower,
Upflown in gladdest hour ;
Or a small twinkling star from distant sphere
Let loose and fluttering here !
Whate'er thou art, thou need'st not fear annoy—
Welcome, thou little joy !
Yet why beneath this roof disport thyself,
Mysterious, wayward elf ?
Proclaim thy mission ! Dost thou come to tell
Of spangled mead and dell—
Of the rich clover-beds, of humming bees,
And high o'er-arching trees ?
Thou seemest the very colours to have sipped
From wild flowers rosy lipped ;
Hast thou, then, left them pale ? and com'st thou here
In penitence and fear ?
Or art thou—sacred thought !—a spirit come
To worship 'neath this dome—
A soul still laden with an earthly love,
Finding no rest above ?
Or art thou but a wild inconstant thing,
Heedless where wends thy wing ?

Ah, garish creature ! thou art now astray,
And fain wouldst be away !
Hadst thou a tongue, I know thou'dst ask where dwell
The flowers thou lov'st so well,
Whose little fragrant chalices are filled
With dew-drops fresh distilled ?
I know thou'dst ask where shines the blessed sun,
And where the small brooks run ?
This is no place, no temple meet for thee :
Away—thou shouldst be free !
Go, like a child's thought, to the sunny air !
Be thou a preacher there !
Preach 'mid the congregation of the flowers,
Through summer's fleeting hours—
Thyself a living witness of His might
Who gave thee to the light !

—JAMES HEDDERWICK.

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

TO THE FRITILLARY:

ON A SABBATH MORN.

ON thy bed of clover playing,
Pretty insect, why so gay?
Why so blithely dressed this morning?
'Tis to thee no Sabbath-day.

Giddy trifler of an hour,
Days to thee are all the same;
Little care hast thou to count them,
Mindful only of thy game.

And thou dost well—for never sorrow
Sat upon thy golden brow;
And never storm of earthly passion
Gathered in thy breast of snow.

Thou hast not sighed at evening's closing,
For hopes that left thee on its wing;
Thou hast not wept at day's returning,
With thoughts of what that day might bring.

Nor ever voice of truth neglected,
Breathed reproaches in thine ear,
Nor secret pang of conscious error,
Spake of retribution near.

Play thy game, thou spotless worm!
Stranger still to care and sorrow;
Take thy meed of bliss to-day,
Thou wilt perish ere to-morrow.

Time has been, when, like thee, thoughtless,
How unlike in all beside!
Lightly sped, and all uncounted,
Blithe I saw the moments glide.

Then the world was all of flowers,
Thornless as thy clover-bed;
Then my folly asked no question,
What might be when these were dead.

Had not Mercy's sterner pity
Bent its chastening rod on me,
Dancing still the round of pleasure,
I had died—but not like thee.

—MRS FR

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

THE BEETLE-WORSHIPPER.

How comest thou on that gentle hand, where Love should kisses
bring

For Beauty's tribute?—answer me, thou foul and frightful thing!
Why dwell upon thy hideous form those reverent eyes that seem
Themselves the worshipped stars that light some youthful poet's
dream?

'When bends the thick and golden grain, that ripens at my command,
From the cracked earth I creep, to bless with food the fainting land;
And thus no foulness in my form the grateful people see,
But maids as sweet and bright as this are priestesses to me.

'Throned in the slime of ancient Nile, I bid the earth to bear,
And blades and blossoms at my voice, and corn and fruits appear;
And thus upon my loathly form are showers of beauty shed,
And peace and plenty join to fling a halo round my head.'

Dark teacher! tell me yet again, what hidden lore doth lie
Beneath the exoteric type of thy philosophy?

'The Useful is the Beautiful; the good, and kind, and true,
To feature and to form impart their own celestial hue.

'Learn farther, that one common chain runs through the heavenly
plan,

And links in bonds of brotherhood the beetle and the man;
Both foul and fair alike from Him, the lord of love, do spring—
And this believe, he loves not well who loves not EVERYTHING.'

—LEITCH RITCHIE.

BEE ECONOMY.

So work the honey bees;
Creatures that, by a rule in nature, teach
The art of order to a peopled kingdom.
They have a king, and officers of sorts,
Where some, like magistrates, correct at home;
Others, like merchants, venture trade abroad;
Others, like soldiers, armed in their stings,
Make boot upon the summer's velvet buds,
Which pillage they with merry march bring home
To the tent royal of their emperor:
Who, busied in his majesty, surveys
The singing masons building roofs of gold;
The civil citizens kneading up the honey;

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

The poor mechanic porters crowding in
Their heavy burdens at his narrow gate ;
The sad-eyed justice, with his surly hum,
Delivering o'er to executors pale
The lazy yawning drone.

—SHAKSPEARE.

THE BUTTERFLY AND THE SNAIL.

As in the sunshine of the morn,
A butterfly, but newly born,
Sat proudly perking on a rose,
With pert conceit his bosom glows ;
His wings, all glorious to behold,
Bedropt with azure, jet, and gold,
Wide he displays ; the spangled dew
Reflects his eyes and various hue.
His now-forgotten friend, a snail,
Beneath his house, with slimy trail,
Crawls o'er the grass ; whom when he spies,
In wrath he to the gardener cries :
' What means yon peasant's daily toil,
From choking weeds to rid the soil ?
Why wake you to the morning's care ?
Why with new arts correct the year ?
Why glows the peach with crimson hue ?
And why the plum's inviting blue ?
Were they to feast his taste designed,
That vermin of voracious kind ?
Crush then the slow, the pilfering race ;
So purge the garden from disgrace !'
' What arrogance !' the snail replied ;
' How insolent is upstart pride !
Hadst thou not thus, with insult vain,
Provoked my patience to complain,
I had concealed thy meaner birth,
Nor traced thee to the scum of earth,
For scarce nine suns have waked the hours,
To swell the fruit and paint the flowers,
Since I thy humbler life surveyed,
In base and sordid guise arrayed :
A hideous insect, vile, unclean,
You dragged a slow and noisome train ;
And from your spider bowels drew
Foul film, and spun the dirty clue.

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

I own my humble life, good friend ;
Snail was I born, and snail shall end.
And what 's a butterfly ? At best
He 's but a caterpillar drest ;
And all thy race (a numerous seed)
Shall prove of caterpillar breed.'

—GAY.

TO THE FIRE-FLY.

THIS morning, when the earth and sky
Were burning with the blush of spring,
I saw thee not, thou humble fly !
Nor thought upon thy gleaming wing.

But now the skies have lost their hue,
And sunny lights no longer play ;
I see thee, and I bless thee too,
For sparkling o'er the dreary way.

O let me hope that thus for me,
When life and love shall lose their bloom,
Some milder joys may come, like thee,
To light, if not to warm, the gloom !

—MOORE.

TO THE VANESSA.

LOVELY insect, haste away ;
Greet once more the sunny day ;
Leave, O leave the murky barn,
Ere trapping spiders thee discern ;
Soon as seen, they will beset
Thy golden wings with filmy net,
Then all in vain to set thee free,
Hopes all lost for liberty.
Never think that I belie ;
Never fear a winter sky ;
Budding oaks may now be seen,
Starry daisies deck the green,
Primrose groups the woods adorn,
Cloudless skies, and blossomed thorn :
These all prove that spring is here ;
Haste away, then, never fear.

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

Skim o'er hill and valley free,
Perch upon the blossomed tree ;
Though my garden would be best,
Couldst thou but contented rest :
There the school-boy has no power
Thee to chase from flower to flower ;
Nought is there but liberty ;
Pleasant place for thee and me.
Though the dew-bent level dale
Rears the lily of the vale,
Though the thicket's bushy dell
Tempts thee to the foxglove's bell,
Come but once within my bounds,
View my garden's airy rounds,
Soon thou 'lt find the scene complete,
And every floweret twice as sweet :
Oft I 've seen, when warm and dry,
'Mong the bean-fields bosom-high,
How thy starry gems and gold
To admiration would unfold ;
Lo ! the arching heavenly bow
Doth all his dyes on thee bestow—
Crimson, blue, and watery green,
Mixed with azure shade between ;
These are thine—thou first in place,
Queen of all the insect race !
And I 've often thought, alone,
This to thee was not unknown ;
For amid the sunny hour,
When I 've found thee on a flower
(Searching with minutest gleg),
Oft I 've seen thy little leg
Soft as glass o'er velvet glides
Smoothen down thy silken sides ;
Then thy wings would ope and shut ;
Then thou seemingly wouldst strut :
Was it nature, was it pride ?
Let the learned world decide.
Enough for me (though some may deem
This a trifling, silly theme)
Wouldst thou in my garden come,
To join the bee's delightful hum ;
These silly themes, then, day and night,
Should be thy trifler's whole delight.

—CLARE.

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

THE COACH AND THE FLY.

UPON a sandy, uphill road,
Which naked in the sunshine glowed,
Six lusty horses drew a coach.
Dames, monks, and invalids, its load,
On foot, outside, at leisure trode.
The team, all weary, stopped and blowed :
Whereon there did a fly approach,
And, with a vastly business air,
Cheered up the horses with his buzz—
Now pricked them here, now pricked them there,
As neatly as a jockey does—
And thought the while—he knew 'twas so—
He made the team and carriage go ;
On carriage-pole sometimes alighting—
Or driver's nose—and biting.
And when the whole did get in motion,
Confirmed and settled in the notion,
He took, himself, the total glory—
Flew back and forth in wondrous hurry,
And as he buzzed about the cattle,
Seemed like a sergeant in a battle,
The files and squadrons leading on
To where the victory is won.
Thus charged with all the commonweal,
This single fly began to feel
Responsibility too great,
And cares, a grievous, crushing weight ;
And made complaint that none would aid
The horses up the tedious hill—
The monk his prayers at leisure said—
Fine time to pray !—the dames, at will,
Were singing songs—not greatly needed !
Thus in their ears he sharply sang,
And notes of indignation ran—
Notes, after all, not greatly heeded.
Ere long the coach was on the top :
' Now,' said the fly, ' my hearties, stop
And breathe—I've got you up the hill ;
And, Messrs Horses, let me say,
I need not ask you if you will
A proper compensation pay'

SELECT POEMS ON INSECTS.

Thus certain ever-bustling noddies
Are seen in every great affair ;
Important, swelling, busy-bodies,
And bores 'tis easier to bear,
Than chase them from their needless care.

—LA FONTAINE.

INSECT EMBLEM.

CHILD of the sun ! pursue thy rapturous flight,
Mingling with her thou lov'st in fields of light ;
And where the flowers of paradise unfold,
Quaff fragrant nectar from their cups of gold.
There shall thy wings, rich as an evening sky,
Expand and shut with silent ecstasy !

Yet thou wert once a worm, a thing that crept
On the bare earth, then wrought a tomb and slept !
And such is man ; soon from his cell of clay
To burst a seraph in the blaze of day !

—ROGERS.



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